COPS CASH IN WITH OFF-DUTY DUTIES, PG 7

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Celebrity pg 57

New things thrill Rihanna

Hope there wasn't any for Santa

CHARGES Two people face more than 200 charges of mail theft after a Canada Post employee alerted police.

The employee called police yesterday after witnessing the theft of mail from boxes in the Richmond Hill area.

Police say they seized numerous cheques and other pieces of mail from addresses in York Region, Toronto and Mississauga.

Both 39-year-old Nino Sokola of Toronto and 57-year-old Olga Antic of Courtice face 201 charges of mail theft, seven counts of possession of stolen property, and other charges.

The two are to appear in a Newmarket court Jan. 8, 2010.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News on the Move

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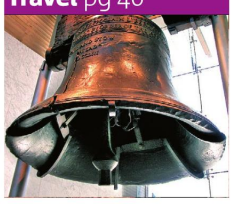

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Maple Leafs The great outdoors

VINCE TALOTTA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto Maple Leafs Mike Komisarek, centre, and Francois Beauchemin share a laugh with some children yesterday at the Ramsden Park outdoor rink. The Leafs held their annual outdoor practice yesterday as Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment Ltd., RONA, and Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation unveiled upgrades and refurbishments to the Ramsden rink in Rosedale as part of the MLSE Team Up Foundation Hockey Rink Legacy Program. More on the Leafs, pages 28, 29.

Green with envy

Toronto to be featured in video at climate change summit

When world leaders gather in Copenhagen on their mission to fight climate change, Toronto will be featured in a video that will play on a round-the-clock loop in the main square.

The city was chosen, along with nine others — including New York, Sao Paulo, Johannesburg and Mexico City — to showcase its green initiatives.

Go Green

"It's an amazing opportunity to have Toronto's name be known around the world as a green leader," said Mayor David Miller, who is attending in his capacity as chair of the C40 cities' initiative on climate change.

"We're seen as leaders, not just because of the leadership role I have at the moment, but because of our history of being very strong environmentalists."

Toronto's video, formally unveiled Monday, showcases the city's clean energy efforts, including the deep lake water cooling project, the wind turbine at Exhibition Place and solar-powered parking slip machines. It also touches on the planned Transit City streetcar network and recladding aging towers with insulation.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MORE COVERAGE, PAGES 4, 9, 17

Lights, camera, Harper

Taxpayers are being asked to pay an extra $1.7 million this fiscal year to help bolster Stephen Harper's communications support services — just as the Prime Minister's Office begins distributing government videos of Harper to the news media.

Supplementary estimates tabled last month by the Privy Council Office, the prime minister's bureaucratic back office, boosted internal operational spending by almost $7.3 million for 2009-10. That's on top of existing budgets. Included in that total is $700,650 for 6½ new positions "providing communications advice, service and support to the prime minister." There's also an extra $1 million for "events" preparation, including "broadcast sound, lighting and recording services, costs of transporting equipment, travel, overtime, office and logistical support ..." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Links

- In the last two weeks, the Privy Council Office started sending news organizations links to new videos in the same way the PMO has routinely distributed photos shot by Harper's official photographer. The photos, and now the videos, have sparked a debate over media access and when the use of government-produced and approved images may be appropriate in an independent news media.

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Local

Health Canada targets baby beds

Two infant deaths in the U.S. have led to the recall of Amby Baby Motion Beds in that country, and Health Canada is advising Canadians to stop using the hammock-like baby bed due to a potential suffocation hazard. Health Canada hasn't received any reports of incidents or injuries in Canada related to the products, but says they should be disassembled and disposed of, and consumers are encouraged to notify the department if they find the products for sale. THE CANADIAN PRESS

METRO INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 2009 Festival of Media Awards

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Tomorrow's Metro

Comment Steve Collins writes about the modern Canadian relationship in Relating.

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Blogs SpinDoctor on how Stephen Harper became the world's newest villain on climate change

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Mom shot in front of child

Police believe gunman was laying in wait for victim

Toronto police were searching for a male suspect yesterday in the slaying of a 45-year-old woman shot dead in front of her little girl.

The two-year-old child, who was in a vehicle nearby, was not injured during the Monday night shooting and police said she is in a "safe place."

"We believe for reasons unknown to us at this time the victim was targeted," said Det.-Sgt. Pauline Gray of the homicide squad.

"The gunman lay in wait for this woman and, with absolute disregard for the victim and her small child, opened fire."

Investigators said they had no reason to believe the woman, identified by police as Laura Rios, was involved in anything illegal.

Rios, who was an employee of an international company, was arriving home about 8:45 p.m. and organizing herself to get out of the car when the gunman fired.

Police said they have talked to the victim's relatives.

ADRIAN MORROW/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Laura Rios, shown here with her daughter Emma, was gunned down Monday night in front of her child. Police are investigating the shooting.

They say the man, described as 5-foot-10 to 6-foot tall and wearing a navy blue sweatshirt and grey sweatpants, drove off in a dark car with a loud muffler.

Gray said she can't imagine what circumstances would lead to a man gunning down a woman in front of her child.

"As far as I'm concerned there can be nothing to do this," Gray said.

"Adults have whatever issues they have but this is a lovely innocent little girl and I can't imagine what she'll have to … go through for the rest of her life."

Gray said the whereabouts of the father of the child are known to police.

Investigators are also studying surveillance video. THE CANADIAN PRESS

WSIB's $11B unfunded liability left off Grit's books

GOVERNMENT A possible accounting change that could increase the size of Ontario's already record deficit isn't likely to take effect this year, Finance Minister Dwight Duncan said yesterday.

In his annual report, Ontario's auditor general questioned the government's policy of excluding the $11-billion, unfunded liability at the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board from its own financial accounts. Auditor Jim McCarter said if the WSIB's debt was included in the province's books, the $24.7-billion deficit would increase by 10 per cent.

Duncan said the choice to force the liability into the province's books was up to the auditor, adding while McCarter signalled it was something he was considering, no decision had been made.

The WSIB said in August it posted a $3.34-billion loss last year as it took in $2.4 billion less than it paid out in benefits and other expenses.

In his report Monday, McCarter said while the WSIB was treated as a trust, the latest figures raised concerns about whether it should remain one. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Man arrested on sex assault charges

Toronto police have arrested one man and are seeking another suspect after two women were allegedly drugged and sexually assaulted. Patrick Sikorski, 24, of Toronto, is charged with administering a drug for sex and gang sex assault. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Targets unattainable: Expert

Province unlikely to meet emission goals, watchdog says

Go Green

Ontario won't be able to meet its reduction targets for greenhouse gases to fight climate change, the province's environmental watchdog predicted yesterday in a report that could deflate Ontario's crusade for tougher national targets.

Even if the Liberal government does everything it promised to do to cut emissions, it still won't meet its targets for 2014 or 2020, said environmental commissioner Gord Miller.

"We have to decide as a society whether ... we're going to participate with the world community."
Gord Miller, environmental commissioner

A report tabled last week by the government on its climate change plan was actually "very frank" about Ontario's inability to meet its targets, which aren't even adequate according to the latest science, he said.

"The plan just forecasts failure going forward, and I think that's not acceptable," Miller said.

Closing Ontario's coal-fired generation plants — which has been put off three times since the Liberals came to power in 2003 — isn't enough to meet the targets set two years ago, he said.

It would require broader measures to curb emissions in the transportation and industry sectors, such as toll roads, which Miller acknowledged would likely be politically unpalatable.

"We have to decide as a society whether we're going to address this problem and we're going to participate with the world community," he said.

"That's a choice we have. But we've set some goals and we're not going to meet them in our present plan. I don't think that's an acceptable course of action."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Political differences led feds to cut funding, charity says

DISPUTE An international ecumenical charity is calling on the Harper government to reconsider a decision to cut its funding, saying it is being punished for taking positions at odds with the Conservatives.

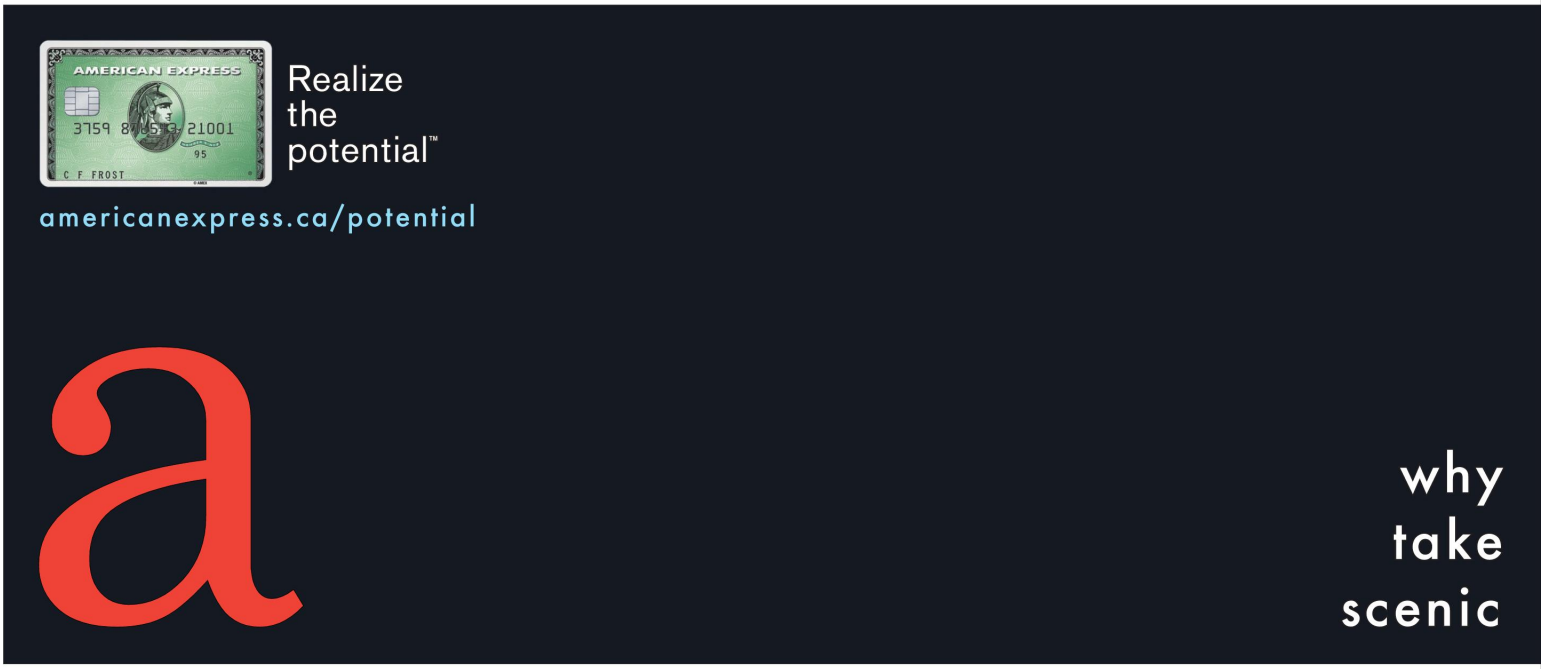
CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE
Mary Corkery

Toronto-based charity KAIROS, which includes the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and United churches, among others, hopes to get International Co-operation Minister Bev Oda to reverse the decision.

The Canadian International Development Agency turned down the group's request for $7 million over four years, saying its projects don't fit with aid priorities.

KAIROS executive director Mary Corkery said CIDA staff supported the group's proposals, but the roadblock came from Oda's office.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Researchers call value of Tamiflu into question

Flu Outbreak

HEALTH A British medical journal, a U.K.-based TV network and researchers from the Cochrane Review are calling into question the science behind the flu drug Tamiflu, suggesting among other things that too few data are publicly available to judge whether the drug is worth what governments have spent to stockpile it.

There are no new findings in the package of reviews and commentaries between the researchers and drug maker Roche.

The main conclusion is that Tamiflu and Relenza, another drug in the same class, have only a modest effect when given to otherwise healthy adults who come down with a bout of seasonal flu — a point that is not in dispute.

"That's entirely consistent with our views," said Charles Penn, an antiviral expert with the World Health Organization.

The review is about how much benefit the drugs confer to otherwise healthy people who catch seasonal flu, not how useful the drugs are in patients at high risk from pandemic flu or hospitalized with severe cases of the H1N1 virus.

Several researchers are concerned the timing of the publication may cause confusion about whether Tamiflu ought to be used in the treatment of the H1N1 virus. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Province cracks down on energy retailers

POWER After years of complaints from consumers, the Ontario government introduced legislation yesterday to crack down on what it called "abusive" and "unfair" practices by energy retailers in the province.

The bill would protect consumers from hidden contract costs, excessive cancellation fees, negative-option contract renewals and other unfair industry practices, Energy Minister Gerry Phillips told the legislature.

"There are few obligations that government must take more seriously than the protection of consumers against unfair, misleading or simply confusing retailing practices," said Phillips.

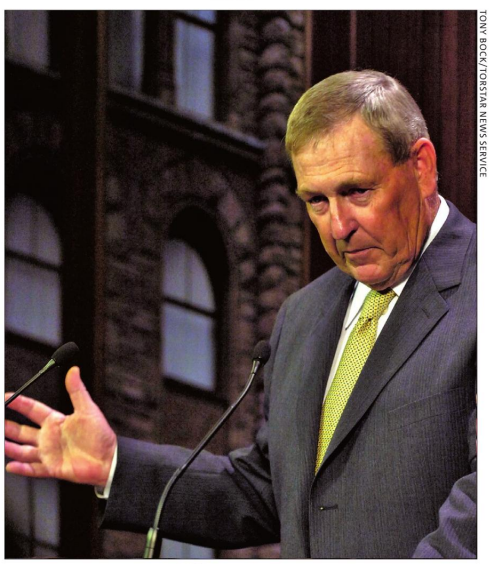
"It's time to bring the abusive practices to a stop, for the good of both consumers and the reputation of the industry."

The legislation will also provide greater fairness and transparency for consumers through rate comparisons and the use of plain language in contracts, added Phillips.

If the bill is passed, energy retailers will no longer be allowed to sign people to contracts on the telephone, said Phillips.

Consumers who feel they were pressured into signing a contract for electricity or natural gas will have three possible cancellation alternatives, including a 10-day cooling off period and another 30 days after receiving the first bill.

Energy sales people who go door-to-door will also have to wear identification badges and undergo training. THE CANADIAN PRESS


TONY BOCK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE
Energy Minister Gerry Phillips

Man sought after hit-and-run

A motorist has surrendered to police after a hit-and-run that claimed the life of an elderly man. Georgina Cappelletti, 62, of Toronto, has been charged with failing to stop after an accident. Police are also looking for the driver of a light-coloured Toyota-type vehicle that drove over the victim. The driver is described as a 55-year-old male with a beard. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto stars in Bosh's new film

The opening scene of Chris Bosh's new documentary, First Ink, shows the hoopster cruising around Toronto, city lights shining off the gleaming hood of his car while a soundtrack blares the same sample over and over: "Rep T-Dot till they bury me."

Sounds like the feel-good movie of the year for Raptors fans nervous about the four-time all-star's impending free agency. And Bosh, for his part, says he has grown to appreciate playing north of the border.

"It's like, we're going to T.O.! ... I just feel comfortable here." Chris Bosh

"I just came here (in the summer) and I was like: 'Dang, I'm comfortable here,'" Bosh told The Canadian Press in a recent interview at a Toronto hotel.

"Usually, when I was younger, I'd come here and I couldn't wait to go back home (to Texas). I'd go home and sit there and do nothing. Now? It's like, we're going to T.O.! When you going back to Dallas? Pfft, I don't know — whenever. I just feel comfortable here."

Bosh has averaged 19.8 points and 9.3 rebounds over his six-plus year career, cementing himself among the most consistent young bigs in the NBA. He also played a pivotal role as the primary big man on the gold medal-winning U.S. Olympic team in Beijing last summer.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

DARREN CALABRESE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A new documentary from Chris Bosh may be the feel-good movie of the year for Toronto Raptors fans nervous about the four-time all-star's impending free agency.

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AMERICAN EXPRESS

not the route?

b

Canwest Global restructuring hits a snag

BUSINESS A heated battle between Canwest Global Communications Corp. and its investment partner Goldman Sachs grew a little more tense yesterday when a Canwest lawyer suggested the fight over its specialty television assets could hinder the restructuring of the entire company.

Lyndon Barnes told a judge presiding over the media conglomerate's court-supervised restructuring that a disagreement with Goldman over the ownership of a division that holds specialty TV assets is a move by Goldman to gain an unfair advantage in the process.

"It will affect not only people involved, but it's having a detrimental effect on the restructuring," he said.

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canwest Global Communications, owners of the National Post, is fighting to retain control of its television channels.

The Winnipeg-based media conglomerate filed for creditor protection for portions of its business earlier this year after it was unable to meet repayment obligations for $4 billion in debt.

Goldman Sachs claims that after filing with the courts, Canwest shifted the TV assets within its operations without consulting Goldman — which holds a stake in a number of highly lucrative specialty channels which the two companies acquired from Alliance Atlantis in 2007.

The New York-based investment bank has suggested the move could be a way for Canwest's creditors to tighten their control on the specialty channels, which include HGTV, Showcase and Diva.

However, Canwest stated in its own court documents that the specialty TV assets — which it calls its "crown jewels" — need to be tightly controlled by the company, or they risk being sold by Goldman.

Canwest also owns the Global Television conventional TV network as well as the National Post and several other large-market daily newspapers.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Health Canada issues warning about some Acai berry products

ADVISORY Health Canada is warning Canadians not to use certain Acai berry products after shipments stopped at the border were found to contain an undeclared drug called sildenafil.

The prescription drug is used to treat erectile dysfunction, but could cause serious side-effects in some people and should only be used under the supervision of a doctor.

The Acai berry products, advertised for anti-aging and weight loss, aren't authorized for sale in Canada, but may have been brought into the country by travellers or bought on the Internet.

Health Canada says anyone who has bought or used the products and has concerns about their health should talk to a doctor.

It says there have been no reports of adverse reactions associated with the use of the seven products in Canada.

But it notes that sildenafil should never be used by people taking a nitrate drug, for example nitroglycerine, as it can cause low blood pressure.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Products

- The products in question are named are Anti-Aging Acai Berry, Guarana Blast, Brazillian Pure, Anti-aging Vital Rez V, Weight Loss VitalAcai, Dietary Supplement Acai Power Blast and Muscle Mass.

Retired Ottawa policeman wins $14.3M draw

A retired Ottawa police officer has more than 14 million reasons to smile. Claude J. Garneau, 61, claimed the winning the winning Lotto 6/49 ticket worth $14.3 million in Toronto yesterday. Garneau plans to move out of his basement apartment and purchase a new condo. He plans to also share the money with family. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Skinner's killers 'cowards': Family

Family members of a man who was beaten up, run over by an SUV and left for dead on a Toronto street are calling the killers "cowards" who should turn themselves in to give the family some peace.

Toronto police announced a $50,000 reward while the family of Christopher Skinner separately put up another $25,000 yesterday for information leading to the conviction of those responsible for the aspiring law student's death.

They stood just steps away from where the 27-year-old man was attacked in the early morning of Oct. 18 and appealed for witnesses to come forward.

Homicide detectives believe two to four people were in the SUV and they haven't kept quiet about the crime.

$75,000 The family of Christopher Skinner yesterday added another $25,000 to a $50,000 police reward for information related to Skinner's death leading to a conviction.

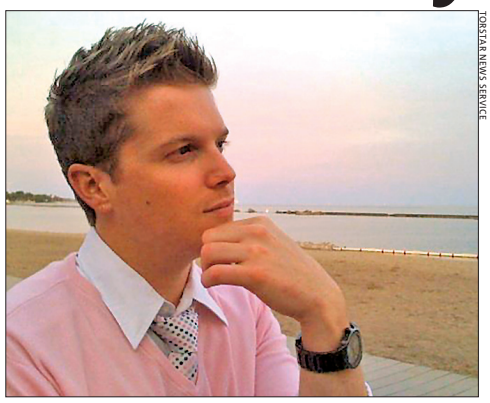
"There's no doubt in my mind that they have spoken to others," said Det. Stacy Gallant. "They have said to a friend or a family member or an acquaintance that they were involved in this incident and those are the people we are targeting right now," he said.

Skinner had just left his sister's birthday party at a downtown bar. Stepping onto the street to hail a cab, he may have inadvertently touched a black SUV as it passed, said Gallant.

Police believe at least two occupants then got out of the vehicle at a red light, beat Skinner, got back into the SUV and drove over him. Skinner later died in hospital.

Gallant, standing at the very spot Skinner was run over, called the actions of the vehicle's occupants "shocking" and "callous."

Warren Skinner described his son as someone who liked to have a good time, was a bit of a class clown and collected friends. He thinks his son's killers were people who were out having a good time and just made a mistake. He hasn't decided whether to forgive them. THE CANADIAN PRESS



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Christopher Skinner, pictured in this file photo, was killed after being beaten and run over in Toronto's Entertainment District.

OSC proceedings begin against Coventree, staff

FINANCE The Ontario Securities Commission has begun proceedings against Coventree Inc. and two current and former officers of its staff in relation to the company's participation in the Canadian asset-backed commercial paper market.

Coventree, a little-known financial services company until the market collapsed in August 2007, had been the largest non-bank arranger of third-party Canadian ABCP. The company is now winding down its operations.

Coventree said allegations it breached securities laws and acted contrary to public interest was "unwarranted and unfair." THE CANADIAN PRESS

School board should save nine pools: Report

RECREATION Toronto's public board should save the final nine school pools on a list slated to close, says a draft report by the board's aquatics working group, sources say.

The report, which trustees are expected to vote on in February, would affect Carleton Village, Central Technical School, Earl Grey, George Harvey Collegiate, Kensington Community School, Monarch Park, W.A. Porter, Western Technical-Commercial School, and Winona McMurrich Public School.

The aquatics working group, headed by David Crombie, was asked to find ways to cover the pools' operating costs through permits, sponsorships and donations, since the school board does not receive any specific funding from the province to run them. It is not clear how or if the working group has come up with enough funds to cover the operating costs. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TONY BRIDGE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Elizley Pagado, 18, and Liz Sajdik, 19, pose by the pool at Monarch Park Collegiate. The Toronto District School board wants to shut down and drain the pool, but the community has raised half the operating costs. It is the only east-end pool to serve special needs students.

City facing huge backlog of infrastructure repairs

FUNDING Despite more borrowing to fix its facilities, the City of Toronto still faces a large backlog of repairs of roads, parks and recreation centres and libraries.

Under the capital budget, passed 32-8 by city council yesterday, the road repair backlog of $252 million will grow to $310 million by 2019.

The 99-branch Toronto Public Library will see its backlog grow to $78.6 million in 2019 from $43.8 million in 2010 — almost $800,000 per branch — while Exhibition Place will have a repair burden of almost $30 million in 2019, from $4 million today.

The city will make some progress in reducing backlogs in the ambulance service, long-term care homes and police services.

Of 10 areas studied, the overall backlog drops to about $800 million from $900 million by 2019.

Council was told the capital budget has grown to $2.4 billion in 2010, from $1.6 billion this year, with 55 per cent earmarked for the TTC.

"The point is we still have a tremendous backlog," said Coun. Case Ootes, a critic of Mayor David Miller's budgeting track record. Miller, meanwhile, stressed that taxpayers will see significant improvements over five years. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Local software developer buys ATM operator
Toronto-based sales software developer Hosted Data Transaction Solutions Inc. said yesterday it has agreed to buy cash machine operator Cash N Go Ltd. for an undisclosed amount, more than doubling its potential annual revenue. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cops making millions off duty: Report

Toronto's highly trained police officers are raking in millions of dollars moonlighting as construction site guards, manhole watchers and other menial jobs that crossing guards or even pylons could do at a fraction of the cost, a Toronto Star investigation has found.

The police force calls this booming private police business "paid duty," and it clears $24 million a year.

The off-duty officers hire themselves out — sometimes to the city at taxpayer expense — for a lofty $65 per hour. That's nearly double the $37.40 per hour a constable with four years experience earns doing real police work, like responding to a 911 call.

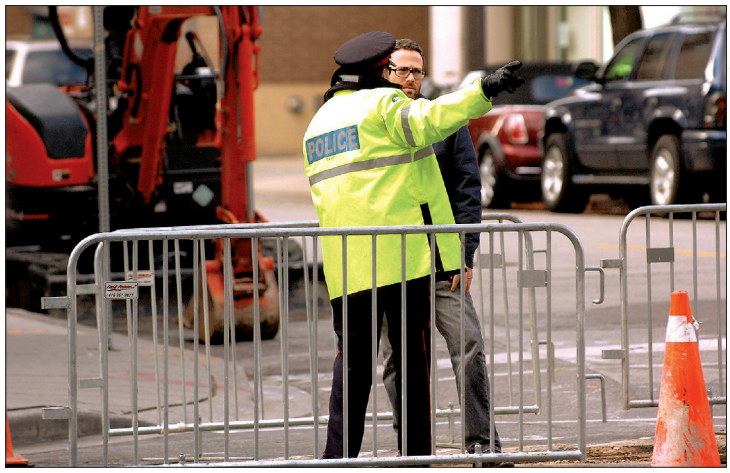
Star reporters witnessed numerous examples of officers doing little or nothing at sites in the downtown core and throughout the city. Outside the Eaton Centre, an officer stood near a barricaded manhole. At another, an officer stood outside police headquarters on College Street while a work crew refurbished the city-owned building's front steps. With associated fees, the taxpayer bill for the College Street job came to $523.

Paid duty officers — whom the force says are a benefit to the city — also provide funeral escorts, expertise on movie sets and crowd control at special events. The Star found other controversial uses of officers and a fleet of taxpayer-purchased police cruisers now used solely for paid duty.

Operating under the belief that laws and regulations require officers to do much of this work, city bureaucrats and police brass have allowed officers to corner this lucrative market. In just a few years, the cost to Torontonians has ballooned more than 50 per cent.

But a look at other cities shows paid duty is often unnecessary. The Star canvassed police from Vancouver to Ottawa, and found Toronto's reliance on paid duty to be the most expensive and wasteful.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



DALE BRAZAO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A police officer on paid duty on Yonge Street explains to Toronto Star reporter David Bruser why cops are needed to direct traffic near construction sites around Toronto.

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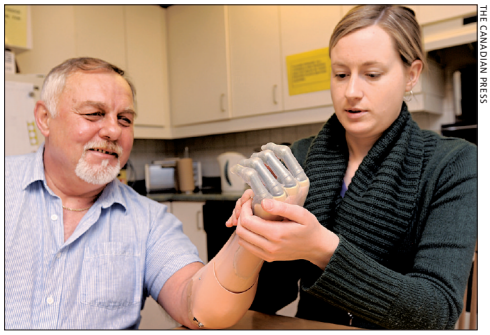
Robotic finger prosthetics now available in Canada

HEALTH Even though he is 60, one of Frank Hrabanek's biggest thrills these days is being able to tie his shoelaces by himself.

Until a short time ago, that everyday, two-handed task would have been impossible for Hrabanek, who lost all four fingers on his dominant left hand following a horrific industrial accident in June 2007.

But two months ago, he was fitted with a prosthesis featuring what are being called the world's first bionic fingers.

Myoelectric sensors inside the elbow-high prosthesis pick up nerve signals from contracting arm muscles, setting the motorized digits in motion — just like natural fingers.


THE CANADIAN PRESS

Frank Hrabanek works with occupational therapist Hannah Hega to master the use of his new ProDigit prosthetic fingers, which are newly available in Canada.

"I am doing so many things," said Hrabanek, one of just four Canadians and 30 people worldwide to have the dexterity of their hands restored with ProDigits, a product developed by Touch Bionics Inc., which was launched commercially yesterday.

"I can use a fork and knife for eating. It's no problem," he said. His wife, Zlata, calls the bionic fingers "a miracle" that have helped return a sense of independence to Hrabanek, who was virtually helpless after his fingers were trapped inside a 500 C die-cast machine.

He was left with a mere stump of a hand and one good thumb.

Rinchen Dakpa, a prosthetist at West Park Healthcare in Toronto who designed Hrabanek's new hand, said before the development of ProDigits, individually powered prosthestics for people with a partial hand amputation did not exist. Dakpa's lab is working on a cover for Hrabanek's prosthesis that will match the shape and colouring of his other hand. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Don't eat the white snow, either

WEATHER If you see snowflakes falling, be sure to retract your tongue. Yellow snow isn't the only kind you want to keep out of your mouth.

"There is no such thing as the pure driven snow," says David Phillips, senior climatologist with Environment Canada.

Snow begins with a nucleus, which can be a speck of dust, or salt, or spore, or bit of pollution, explains Phillips. Then a process called sublimation takes place; water vapour in the air condenses onto that speck and grows.

So that flake you're jumping around and wiggling to ingest could have a smokestack to thank for its creation.

If you feel like scooping up a handful to eat, don't forget the snow fleas, teeny wingless insects that live and love in the drifts. "These insects are in there and they thrive ... They likely get into the snow through the soil or animal excrement," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

HST Ontario's opposition parties say the Liberal government shut down public hearings into the proposed harmonized sales tax in the middle of debate. The Progressive Conservatives and New Democrats say the Liberals used a procedural manoeuvre late Monday night to end hearings into the bill to create a 13 per cent sales tax. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Piano teacher accused of assaults during lessons

Police have charged a piano teacher in Stoney Creek after allegations that assaults took place during private lessons. Gordon Pissey, 29, also known as Gordon Zanity-Donn, is charged with assault with a weapon. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Alberta's power play

Alberta has broken a record for electricity demand. Authorities say electricity use reached an all-time high of 10,046 megawatts Monday for an hour after 6 p.m. That surpasses last winter's record of 9,806 megawatts set on Dec. 15, 2008.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The indictment: Mounties failed the test

PAUL PRITCHARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Robert Dziekanski holds a small table in this image from gripping video of his last minutes at the Vancouver airport.

They weren't credible. Their conduct fell short of that expected of a Mountie.

Their use of a Taser against an agitated Polish immigrant was "inappropriate."

This was the damning indictment against four RCMP officers in a report by the force's independent watchdog yesterday.

It was sparked by the night Robert Dziekanski died after being Tasered at Vancouver airport in 2007.

The Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP blasted almost all aspects of the officers' response to Dziekanski .

"The versions of events given … by the four RCMP officers involved … are not deemed credible by my commission," chairman Paul Kennedy told reporters.

Kennedy said he was also aware of the testimony the officers gave at a B.C. public inquiry into the death.

"I don't attach any weight to it."
Paul Kennedy on the officers' testimony

"I've indicated to you that I have not found that credible. I don't attach any weight to it."

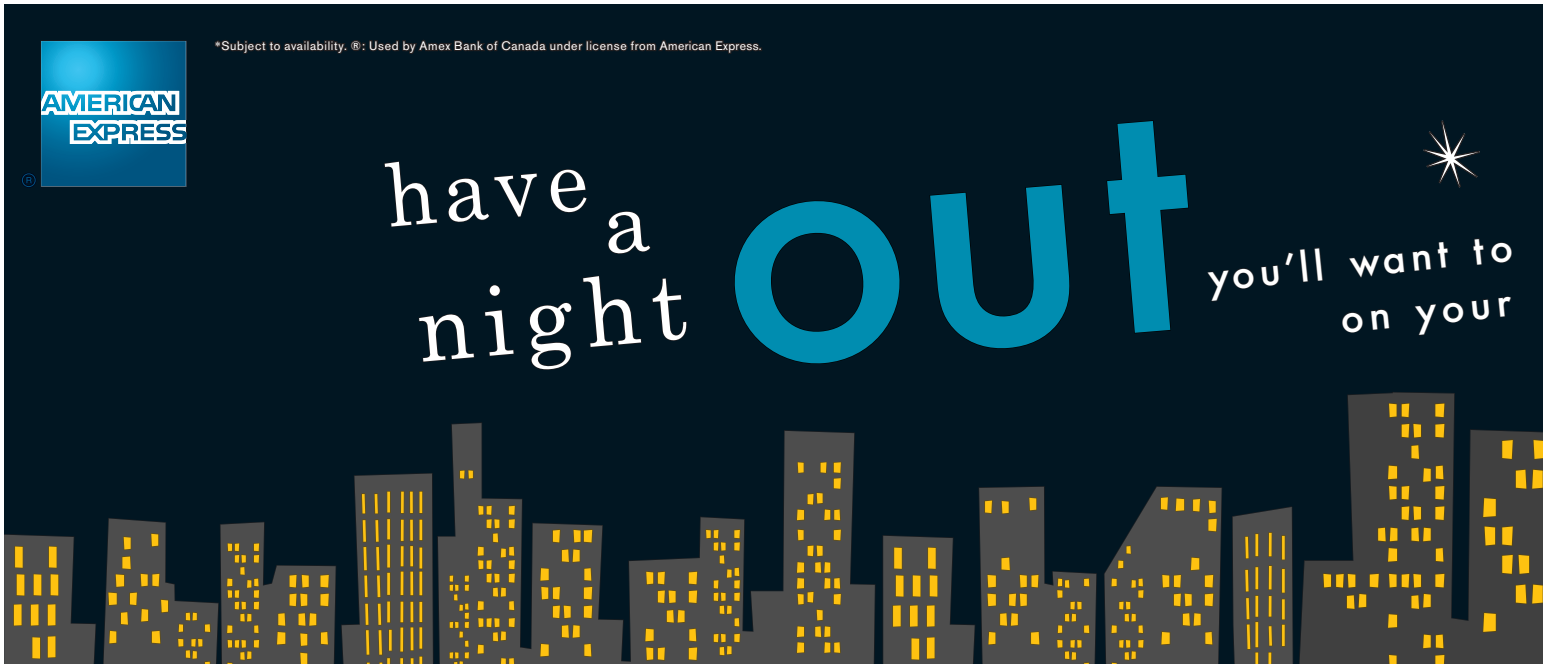
The officers were called to the airport after Dziekanski, who didn't speak English and had arrived from Poland nearly 10 hours earlier, started throwing furniture.

Within seconds, one of them stunned Dziekanski with a Taser and then fired it four more times.

A witness's video differed wildly from the police account.

"I found the conduct of the responding members fell short of that expected of members of the RCMP," says the 208-page report.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



His new life in Canada ended at the airport

- The four RCMP officers were called to the Vancouver airport in October 2007, after Robert Dziekanski, who didn't speak English and had arrived from Poland nearly 10 hours earlier, started throwing furniture in the arrivals area.
- Within seconds, one of them stunned him with a Taser and then fired the weapon four more times.
- The officers said they fired because they felt threatened by Dziekanski, who was holding a stapler.
- Crown prosecutors in B.C. decided not to charge any of the four officers.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The report: What went tragically wrong

RCMP use of the Taser was 'premature, inappropriate'

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN

Paul Kennedy, head of the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP, speaks after releasing his report yesterday.

Some key findings of the Commission for Public Complaints against the RCMP in the death of Robert Dziekanski at Vancouver airport:

- While they were in the lawful execution of their duties as police officers, the four officers failed to adopt a measured, co-ordinated and appropriate response to Dziekanski's reported behaviour.
- The senior on-scene RCMP member failed to take charge.
- No meaningful attempt was made to de-escalate the situation.
- No warning — visual or otherwise — was given to Dziekanski prior to him being Tasered.
- Use of the Taser against Dziekanski was premature and inappropriate.
- The Taser was used multiple times on Dziekanski without any significant effort made to determine the need for further use.
- The RCMP members present should have more actively provided first aid and monitored him.
- The four RCMP members inappropriately met alone after the death of Dziekanski prior to giving their statements.
- The versions of events given to investigators by the four RCMP officers are not deemed credible.
- The senior on-scene RCMP member should not have been present at the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team briefing held at the Richmond detachment on October 14, 2007.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nova Scotia premier heads a Copenhagen contingent
Nova Scotia Premier Darrell Dexter is heading to Copenhagen to participate in the United Nations conference on climate change. Dexter will be joined in Denmark by Environment Minister Sterling Belliveau and representatives from 12 Nova Scotia businesses. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Calgary **Ear come two shapely protesters**

JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wearing bunny ears, cottontails, and signs reading, Only Animals Should Wear Fur, PETA protesters Elisa Mittag, left, and Kristina Addington are watched by construction workers on a -20C day in Calgary yesterday. The pair were urging people to cross fur off their Christmas shopping lists.

Canada in hot seat

Not enough pressure to get deal, envoy says

The United Nations weather agency has delivered a sobering forecast at the Copenhagen climate talks that could turn up the heat on Canada.

The World Meteorological Organization reported yesterday this decade will probably rank as the warmest since records were first kept in 1850.

The news comes as the Stephen Harper government faces heavy criticism at home and abroad to do more to fight climate change.

But Canada's top climate envoy says the UN report doesn't crank up the pressure to get a deal done in Copenhagen.

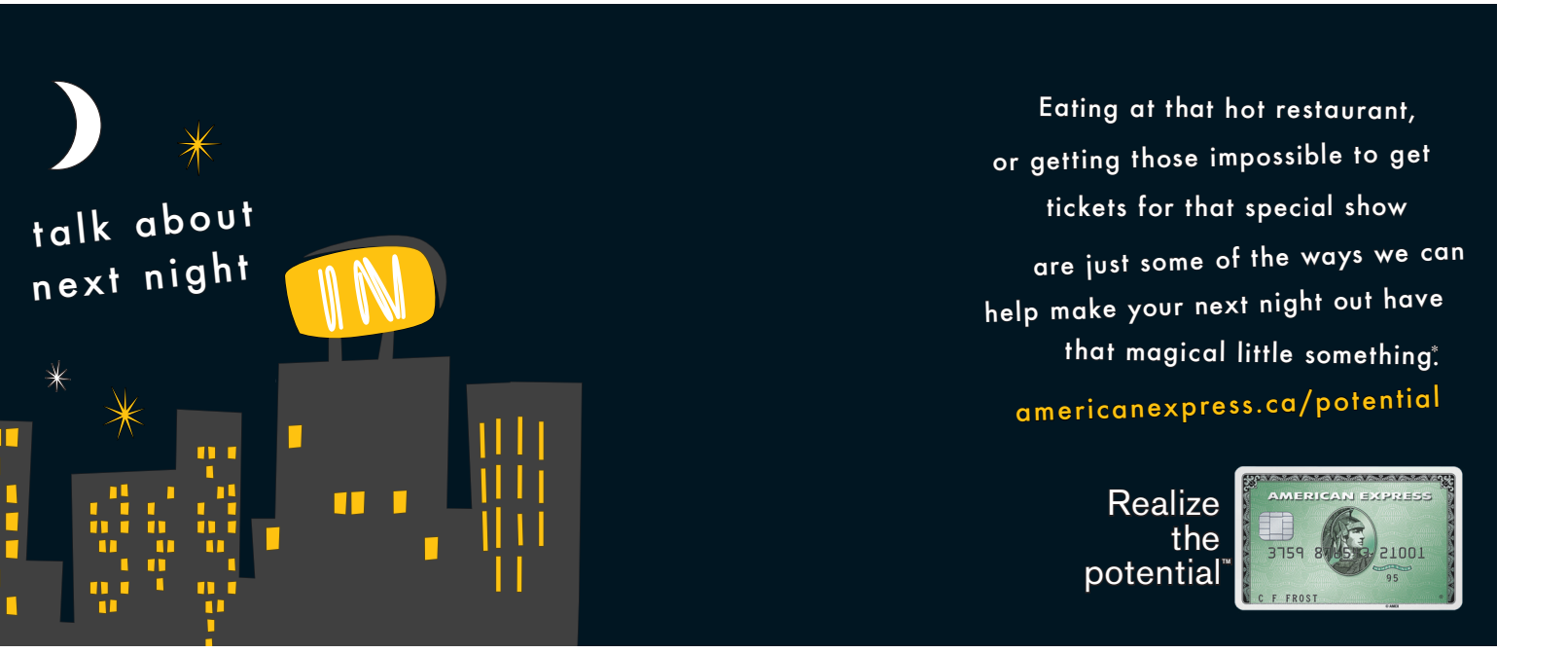
"I think it is simply … a re-confirmation of what we know," said Michael Martin, the chief climate-change negotiator.

If there was any ray of sunshine poking through the gloomy forecast, it was that only Canada and the United States experienced cooler conditions than average.

January's average temperature in the Great Lakes region was colder than normal. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Signs of the times

- The World Meteorological Organization reports troubling signs of a warming across Canada.
- Vancouver and Victoria set hot-weather records in late July.
- A record number of tornadoes whipped across Ontario, killing a record number of people.
- Avalanches were almost double the yearly average for the past decade and the worst since 2002-03.
- Arctic sea ice has been melting for three decades. The biggest thaws come during the summer melt season. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Arctic wildlife will get a $5-million boost

Go Green

m.metronews.ca
ScanLife
A new report urges Ottawa to partner with municipalities as a cheaper way to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Scan this barcode for the full story.

WILDLIFE The federal government says it will spend $5 million to study a proposed marine conservation area in Lancaster Sound at the eastern gate of the Northwest Passage.

"As global climate change continues and traffic through the Northwest Passage is expected to increase, our government is committed to safeguarding Canada's Arctic," Environment Minister Jim Prentice said yesterday.

Lancaster Sound, off the northern shores of Baffin Island, is marked by a dramatic coastline dominated by 300-metre cliffs and is interspersed with bays, inlets and deep fiords.

It's also rich in wildlife.

Most of the world's narwhal, as well as large numbers of beluga and bowhead whales, swim among the icebergs that bob in its waters.

Polynyas — large sections of year-round, ice-free water — make rich habitat for seals and walrus, which in turn attract numerous polar bears.

Seabirds flock there in the hundreds of thousands.

The region has been on Parks Canada's conservation list for decades, and it was once considered for UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

Like other Arctic waterways, Lancaster Sound is also experiencing melting sea ice that makes it increasingly accessible.

Commercial shipping and private voyages are slowly increasing, as is international pressure to exploit Arctic energy and fishery resources.

Ocean dumping, undersea mining and energy exploration would be banned in a marine conservation area. THE CANADIAN PRESS

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Environment Minister Jim Prentice: 'Our government is committed to safeguarding Canada's Arctic.'

Inuit want share of global fund

Go Green

WARMING The head of Canada's main Inuit organization says her people deserve a share of any global fund created to help people adapt to a warming planet.

Mary Simon, in Canada's delegation to the Copenhagen climate conference, says money should be made available to populations at risk in both developing and developed countries.

Commonwealth countries backed the idea of a special fund for that purpose that would grow to $10 billion a year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Two men face charges after N.L. pot bust

Two Ottawa men are facing charges in Newfoundland after police seized five kilograms of marijuana from a vehicle. The RCMP say the vehicle was stopped for a traffic violation on the Trans-Canada Highway near Corner Brook yesterday when the pot was found. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Report urges guaranteed income for poor

POVERTY A Senate report on poverty says tax benefits for the poor should be increased to give them a guaranteed income equal to what is called the low-income cut-off line.

The report from the social affairs committee urges a federal minimum wage of $10 and says child tax benefits should gradually rise to $5,000.

The report says the government's goal should be to get people out of poverty, rather than trying to make poverty more manageable.

The 74 recommendations in the 290-page report cover everything from the general problems of getting people off welfare, to social housing, help for aboriginals and refugees, and a federal-provincial strategy for early-childhood education.

The report points out that programs to help seniors out of poverty have been enormously successful, suggesting this can be extended to other groups.

$10 The federal minimum wage recommended by a Senate report on poverty.

It urges concerted federal and provincial efforts to keep teens in school, help with post-secondary education and provide more support for people in training programs.

It says the Working Income Tax Benefit gives people an incentive to get a job and urges the government commit to a schedule of long-term planned increases to bring recipients of this benefit up to the low-income cut-off line.

The cut-offs, which differ based on region and family size, measure the point at which families spend 20 percentage points more of their income on food, shelter and clothing than the average Canadian family.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jocelyn Vine, left, vice-president of patient care for the IWK Health Centre, and Kathryn London-Penny, executive director of public relations, head to a news conference yesterday regarding the death of James Delorey in Halifax. The child wandered away from his home in rural Nova Scotia Saturday and was found suffering severe hypothermia two days later.

Rescued boy dies in Halifax

Autistic child lost in woods succumbs to hypothermia

James Delorey, the Cape Breton boy who died in hospital yesterday after miraculously surviving two nights lost in the frozen wilderness, was remembered as a calm and quiet child whose big brown eyes did most of the talking.

The seven-year-old succumbed to severe hypothermia less than a day after he was found unconscious in a densely wooded area of the island, about a kilometre from his home in South Bar, N.S.

James Delorey

Rescue officials said the little boy, who had followed the family dog into the woods Saturday afternoon, probably clung to life by seeking shelter in the thick underbrush and huddling with the pet.

However, the cold took its toll.

James wasn't wearing a winter coat and his vital signs were weak when he was found Monday in the fetal position, covered in a light dusting of snow.

It was unclear whether he ever regained consciousness.

Paul MacDonald, the principal at James' school in nearby Sydney, said the boy couldn't speak because he had autism, but that didn't stop him from leaving a big impression on his teachers and fellow students.

"Even though he was non-verbal, he could show his emotions," he said, adding the boy loved playing with blocks and hanging out in the cafeteria.

"He had a nice way about him ... He was very calm, like the picture they're showing in the papers. That's the way he was around the school."

Melanie Sampson, a resident of South Bar who lives down the road from the Fraser family, said she did not see James outside very often.

With less than three weeks to go before Christmas, the town is in mourning, Sampson said.

"It's tough no matter what time of year it is, especially after the miracle of yesterday when he was found alive ... it was such an emotional roller-coaster," she said.

Jocelyn Vine, vice-president of patient care for the IWK Health Centre, said the boy's family was with him when he died.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hate graffiti charges laid

A 31-year-old man is facing charges related to hate graffiti in Woodstock, Ont., linked to four vandalism cases over the last 10 months THE CANADIAN PRESS

RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alwyn Morris, 1984 Olympic gold medallist, gets set to carry the Olympic Flame yesterday through his Mohawk hometown of Kahnawake, south of Montreal.

Gold medallist brings torch to Mohawk land

Protesters greet Olympic flame run

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

Cheering schoolchildren holding paper torches greeted the Olympic flame as it passed through a Mohawk reserve yesterday.

Hundreds lined the streets of Kahnawake as former gold medallist Alwyn Morris carried the Olympic torch after it was carefully lit from a small lantern.

It was 25 years ago that Morris, a local hero, won gold and bronze medals for canoeing at the Los Angeles Olympics.

"What a great thing to rekindle the (Olympic) spirit in the community and give some hope and dreams to some very young people here who may want to follow in those footsteps," he said.

Morris told reporters the Mohawk community is misunderstood by Canadians and has been given "some very unappealing stereotypes."

"I represented Canada at those Olympic Games, it didn't take away anything away from Canada. I'm also a Mohawk and that's not something to be afraid of," he said.

"This is something about bringing people together, not separating people."

While 500 people cheered from the sidelines during the flame's noon-hour appearance, the event took place amid controversy.

The RCMP was not welcome on the territory and, after negotiations, the torch was escorted by a small group of native peacekeepers.

A handful of natives staged a demonstration and carried large white banners that declared the Olympic torch was not welcome in the community, just south of Montreal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A small group of native protesters demonstrate as the Olympic torch passes through the Mohawk town of Kahnawake yesterday.

On the web

- Follow the Olympic torch's journey with an interactive map at metronews.ca/sports.

Xstrata to lay off 700 in Timmins

MINING The Northern Ontario city of Timmins will be left with the gaping economic loss of about 700 well-paying jobs after global mining company Xstrata PLC announced the closure of copper and zinc operations there next May.

"It's going to be a huge challenge," Mayor Tom Laughren said Tuesday.

Lower global demand and the smaller size of the copper smelter and zinc processing plant in Timmins were among reasons given for the closures, Laughren said.

The Swiss miner also cited a high Canadian dollar for its decision to shut down the zinc smelter.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Falconbridge

- Xstrata acquired Toronto-based nickel and copper producer Falconbridge in August 2006 after a hotly contested bidding war, before world commodity prices peaked last year and then crashed when the global economy slowed dramatically.

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Canadian mine in Mexico shut down
A Mexican mine run by a Canadian company embroiled in a controversy around the death of a local activist has been temporarily shut down over environmental concerns. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Soldiers file fewer sick days: Data

FORCES The stress of combat in war-torn Afghanistan hasn't stopped Canadian soldiers from showing up for work, according to new Canadian Forces figures on sick days.

The data suggests overall sick leave — largely for serious psychiatric and musculoskeletal problems — has been trending significantly downwards since 2004.

Army members were booking twice as many days off in 2004 as they did last year for psychiatric problems, according to figures provided to The Canadian Press.

"It's starting to trend down ... despite the fact that we have continued to be in Afghanistan."
Col. Hugh MacKay, Canadian Forces

Sick leave for post-traumatic stress disorder dropped to about 350 days per 1,000 soldiers in 2008, from about 850 days per 1,000 soldiers in 2004.

Col. Hugh MacKay of Canadian Forces Health Services said he was "pleasantly surprised" by the numbers.

"This is a very positive finding from a sick-leave perspective," MacKay said.

"It's starting to trend down to what Air Force and Navy levels have been despite the fact that we have continued to be in Afghanistan and are maintaining this high operational tempo."

MacKay credits the expansion of mental-health services and better support for those transitioning back to work following a physical or mental illness for the sharp decrease.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MacKay under fire

NDP seeks resignation after letter blasts Tories

The fury over the Afghan detainee controversy flared anew yesterday with demands for Defence Minister Peter MacKay's head following an unprecedented letter from 23 former ambassadors condemning the Harper government.

FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The NDP is calling for Defence Minister Peter MacKay's resignation over the alleged torture of Afghan detainees.

The NDP demanded MacKay's resignation, accusing him of misleading the House of Commons over what the government knew about the possible torture of prisoners handed over by Canadian troops — and what it did about the allegations.

"MacKay has zero credibility," MP Paul Dewar told a news conference. "The buck stops with MacKay and he has to go, and the prime minister must call a public inquiry into this coverup."

The fresh furor came after the release of a letter signed by 23 ex-ambassadors that condemned Conservative attacks on the credibility of diplomat Richard Colvin, saying it threatens to cast a chill over Canada's foreign service.

Colvin testified before a Commons committee that Canadian officials were warned about possible torture in 2006 but took little or no action to halt the transfer of prisoners to Afghan authorities.

A series of secret memos examined by The Canadian Press support his assertion and show the government placed more emphasis on writing key messages on how Canada respects human rights, rather than fixing the transfer arrangement.

The main line of defence for the government has been that there is no evidence of Canadian-captured prisoners being abused by the Afghans prior to 2007.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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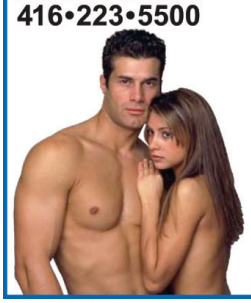
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Taylor Kidd Marketplace
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LINDSAY
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LONDON
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125 York St.
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Westmount Shopping Centre
White Oaks Mall
MAPLE
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MARKHAM
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Cachet Village
Market Village
Markville Shopping Centre
Pacific Mall
RioCan Marketplace
MIDLAND
Mountainview Mall
MILTON
377 Main St. East
MISSISSAUGA
6965 Davand Dr.
980 Eglinton Ave. East
2800 Skymark Ave.
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Dixie Value Mall
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Empress Walk
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North York Sheridan Mall
Sheppard Centre
Yorkgate Mall
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Hopedale Mall (kiosk)
Oakville Place
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Orillia Square Mall
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Plane makes emergency landing in Gander

A British Airways Boeing 767 had to make an emergency landing in Gander, N.L., yesterday after the pilot reported smoke in the cockpit. The aircraft was en route to the Bahamas from the U.K. when it was diverted. THE CANADIAN PRESS

No charges for abandoning disabled women

WINNIPEG Two group home employees who were fired for abandoning two mentally disabled women in a van last spring while they went to a movie will not face any criminal charges.

Winnipeg police have confirmed the Crown prosecutor who reviewed the case decided that charges would not be laid.

But no one connected to the case is willing to explain why.

A spokeswoman for Manitoba Justice said the Crown is not in a position to comment on its advice to the police.

The two young women were left sitting in a van in the parking lot as the two employees in charge of their care went to a theatre last May.

Police officers patrolling the area noticed the women sitting in the van and waited with them until the staff members returned from the movie.

The employees were later fired and police opened an investigation.

At the time, police warned the two workers that they could be charged with failing to provide the necessities of life.

The charge in the Criminal Code includes a provision that covers workers caring for people with mental disorders who are unable to look after themselves.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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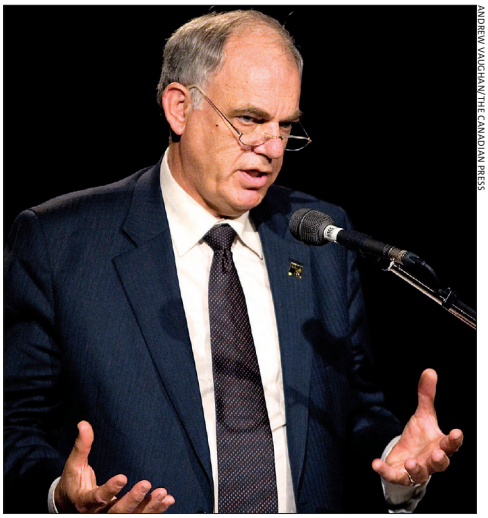

ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Konrad Von Finckenstein, chairman of the CRTC, believes the debate on the fee for carriage issues is scaring consumers.

CRTC tries to solve fee issue

It took the deadpan, I- don't-suffer-fools-gladly style of broadcast regulator Konrad Von Finckenstein to pinpoint what many Canadians might be feeling about the bewildering cable-versus-TV battle.

"Why are we frightening consumers, why are we putting out big figures, rather than trying to figure out how to solve this problem? The problem is, we want to keep a viable Canadian TV system," the chairman of the Canadian Radio-television Commission (CRTC) asked cable and satellite executives yesterday.

"Instead, we seem to have a debate that nobody understands, we have a huge publicity campaign that nobody understands, and we have figures and concepts swirling around that don't make sense."

"We seem to have a debate that nobody understands." Konrad Von Finckenstein, CRTC

For the third time, the CRTC is examining whether conventional broadcasters should be paid fees by the cable and satellite companies for the privilege of carrying their channels. The issue is dubbed value for signal, or fee for carriage.

Consumers have been bombarded for several months by newspaper, radio, TV and Internet ads about why such fees would either save local television by making the greedy cable companies share the wealth, or wallop them in the pocketbook with an unjust tax tacked on to their monthly bills.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Hillcrest Shopping Centre
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Thornhill
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7378 Yonge St.

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Vaughan Mills Outlet Mall
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2 - 160 Cidermill Ave.
3 - 4000 Hwy. 7

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ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff, shown in this file photo, laid out proposals yesterday for Canada's pension "crisis".

Liberals lay out pension proposals

Plans look like ours, say NDP

Michael Ignatieff unveiled proposals yesterday aimed at providing urgent help to people left in "catastrophic" financial straits due to Canada's pension "crisis."

But if the situation is so urgent, critics questioned, why did Ignatieff wait until just before Parliament's six-week Christmas break to echo proposals made by NDP Leader Jack Layton two months ago?

Layton's office issued a mock Liberal news release entitled: "How to write Liberal policy: Take an NDP release, put the leader's name on it and re-announce it a couple of months later."

Ignatieff said that unlike the NDP, the Liberals are a government in waiting and must be more responsible in drafting policy proposals.

"We've been working on this for more than a year. These are complicated issues so you want to get them right," he said.

Ignatieff said the proposals were also timed to stir debate in advance of the Dec. 17-18 pension summit of federal and provincial finance ministers in Whitehorse. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Suggestions

- Create a supplementary Canada Pension Plan so Canadians can voluntarily invest extra money.
- Give employees, after the bankruptcy of their company, the option of having the CPP take over their pension management.
- Give Canadians on long-term disability pensions priority status as creditors in cases of bankruptcy.

Imprisonment rate up 1%

PENAL SYSTEM Canada's incarceration rate increased one per cent in 2008-09, driven largely by a continued increase in the number of adults held in provincial and territorial jails while awaiting trial or sentencing.

Statistics Canada reports that on any given day, an average of 37,425 adults and 1,898 youth aged 12 to 17 were in custody in Canada, for a total of 39,323 inmates.

This resulted in an incarceration rate of 118 people in custody for every 100,000 people in Canada.

It was the fourth straight annual increase in the incarceration rate after a decade of steady declines. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Derailed CN cars still burning

EVACUATION Several rail cars were still burning yesterday after a weekend derailment near the Saskatchewan-Manitoba boundary.

Although some people living near the site had been allowed to return home, a CN spokesman said another evacuation was required as a precaution. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Competent Afghan force a decade and a half away: Karzai
Afghan President Hamid Karzai said it will be at least 15 years before they can bankroll a security force strong enough to protect the country from insurgency. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

The heat is on

UN agency says this decade warmest ever

This decade is on track to become the warmest since records began in 1850, and 2009 could rank among the top-five warmest years, the UN weather agency reported yesterday on the second day of a pivotal 192-nation climate conference in Denmark.

Only Canada and the U.S. experienced cooler conditions than average, the World Meteorological Organization said, although Alaska had the second-warmest July on record.

In central Africa and southern Asia, this will probably be the warmest year, but overall, 2009 will "be about the fifth-warmest year on record," said Michel Jarraud, secretary-general of the WMO.

The decade 2000 to 2009 "is very likely to be the warmest on record, warmer than the 1990s, than the 1980s and so on," Jarraud told a news conference, holding a chart with a temperature curve pointing upward. The second warmest decade was the 1990s.

From 2007 to 2009, the summer melt reduced the Arctic Ocean ice cap to its smallest extent ever recorded.

In the 2007-2009 International Polar Year, researchers found that Antarctica is warming more than previously believed. Almost all glaciers worldwide are retreating.

Meanwhile, such destructive species as jellyfish and bark-eating beetles are moving northward out of normal ranges, and seas expanding from warmth and glacier melt are encroaching on low-lying island states.

If 2009 ends as the fifth-warmest year, it would replace the year 2003.

According to the U.S. space agency NASA, the other warmest years since 1850 have been 2005, 1998, 2007 and 2006. NASA says the differences in readings among these years are so small as to be statistically insignificant.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Go Green

Trying for a deal

- Negotiators at the two-week UN climate talks in Copenhagen turned yesterday to "metrics," "gas inventories" and other dense technicalities, as delegates worked to craft a global deal to rein in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases and stem climate change.

Denmark **If a tree talks in Copenhagen ...**

ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An activist from the AVAZZ organization (People in Action) protests at the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen yesterday during a demonstration against the cutting of trees.

Secretary-General optimistic about deal

Go Green

CLIMATE CHANGE UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon predicted yesterday that a robust agreement to combat climate change will be reached in Copenhagen and implemented immediately. "From all corners of the globe we see unprecedented momentum for a deal," the UN chief told reporters. "I'm encouraged and I'm optimistic."

Ban said for the Copenhagen conference to be a success, the agreement must include ambitious reductions in carbon emissions by developed countries as well as ambitious actions by poorer developing countries to curb emissions. Rich nations must also provide financial support and to help developing countries, he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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the Bay OPTICAL

Iraq elections delayed again

Iraq's presidential council yesterday again postponed nationwide parliamentary elections, setting March 7 as the date for the vote. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. top judges question law used to convict Black

Justices on the U.S. Supreme Court are asking tough questions about the fraud conviction of Canadian business mogul Conrad Black.

The questions suggest that the federal law that helped convict him may be too vague.

Black, who's serving a 6½-year prison sentence for mail fraud and obstruction of justice, wasn't present for the hearing because he cannot be released on bail.

Family members, including his daughter, Alana, were in attendance in the courtroom.

Black's lawyer, Miguel Estrada, argued the law is so vague it gives prosecutors free rein to prosecute and convict any conduct that looks suspicious.

Several justices — including the court's newest member, Sonia Sotomayor — appeared to agree.

They peppered federal government lawyer Michael Dreeben with questions about the so-called honest services law that's commonly used to prosecute corporate executives for fraud.

Conrad Black

Justice Stephen Breyer was particularly forceful, suggesting that under the law a U.S. employee could be charged for going to a baseball game on company time because prosecutors could argue the worker was depriving his employer of honest services.

There are 150 million workers in the United States, Breyer said, and 140 million of them would "fail your test," he told Dreeben.

Dreeben disagreed, saying that someone prosecuted under the law is "playing the role of loyal corporate employee, loyal corporate officer but he's actually working for himself."

The U.S. government used the honest services law when it prosecuted Black, the former chairman of Hollinger International Inc.

Several justices suggested yesterday the law needed to be narrowed, and some questioned whether it was so vague that it should be struck down altogether.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

IRAQ A series of co-ordinated attacks struck Baghdad yesterday, including two suicide car bombers and another vehicle that blew up near government sites. At least 127 were killed and hundreds wounded in the worst wave of violence in the capital in more than a month, authorities said. A total of five attacks, which also included a suicide car bomb on a police patrol, showed the ability of insurgents to strike high-profile targets in the heart of Baghdad and marked the third time since August government buildings were targeted with multiple blasts that killed more than 100 people.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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One expensive spirit
It better be good to the last drop: A bottle of 1788 Vieux Cognac has gone at a Paris auction of wine and spirits for $25,000. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Militia storms students

Hard-line militiamen firing tear gas and throwing stones stormed a crowd of thousands of university students protesting for a second day yesterday, as Iran threatened a tougher crackdown on the opposition after the biggest anti-government demonstrations in months.

More than 200 people were arrested in Tehran Monday during protests by tens of thousands at universities nationwide, and Iran's top prosecutor warned further unrest would not be tolerated. He hinted authorities could even pursue the top opposition leader, Mir Hossein Mousavi, an escalation the government has so far balked at in Iran's post-election turmoil.

Masked motorcyclists, likely militiamen, harassed Mousavi at his Tehran office yesterday. An angry Mousavi confronted them, daring them, "Kill me!" before being hustled away by aides, according to pro-opposition websites.

Authorities appear concerned the protest movement could pick up new steam. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tirana **Freedom rally**

HEKTOR PUSTINA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Albanian and NATO flags are held by demonstrators yesterday during a peaceful rally in Tirana to commemorate a 1990 student uprising that helped end the country's communist regime. More than 30,000 people took part in yesterday's rally and concert in central Skanderbeg Square.

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Former UN chief lauds Kenya

Former UN chief Kofi Annan praised Kenya's government yesterday for acting on reforms necessary to avoid a repeat of the bloodshed that followed the disputed 2007 president poll. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. appeals to North Korea

An envoy dispatched by U.S. President Barack Obama launched a mission yesterday to coax North Korea to rejoin international talks on ending its nuclear programs amid warnings of strong sanctions if Pyongyang refuses.

Veteran diplomat Stephen Bosworth's visit is being closely watched for signs whether the isolated communist country will return to the negotiating table after carrying out an atomic test blast in May and quitting the six-nation talks.

Bosworth arrived in the North Korean capital yesterday along with Washington's lead nuclear negotiator, Sung Kim.

Footage from APTN showed the pair at an airport in Pyongyang, shaking hands with North Korean officials and posing for photos.

In Washington, State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley told reporters that Bosworth and his team likely had meetings yesterday and expected more high-level talks today, as well. He said U.S. officials don't expect any communication with Bosworth's group until it leaves North Korea.

Just before Bosworth began his mission, a senior U.S. official had said bluntly that he was bringing no new incentives.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AHN YOUNG-JOON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Korean soldiers run during a South Korea-U.S. combined air assault exercise yesterday to prepare for possible aggression by North Korea in Yeoju, South Korea.

Court date scheduled for Mumbai accused

TERROR A Chicago man charged with helping to plan the terrorist attacks in the Indian city of Mumbai that left 166 dead will appear in court today to respond to the charges, federal prosecutors said yesterday.

David Coleman Headley, 49, is due to appear before U.S. District Judge Harry Leinenweber for arraignment.

Headley was charged Monday with conducting surveillance on locations around Mumbai that later became the targets of bloody attacks blamed on members of the Pakistan-based group Lashkar-e-Taiba. The group, whose name means Army of the Pure, is an outgrowth of friction between Pakistan and India over the disputed territory of Kashmir.

Lashkar-e-Taiba has been outlawed in Pakistan.

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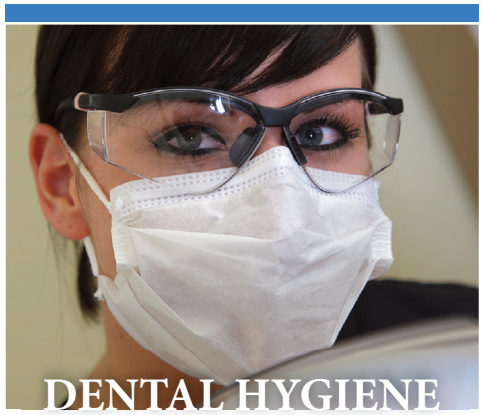
Danish paper

- David Headley, an American of Pakistani descent, was charged with plotting to attack the Jyllands Posten newspaper in Denmark.



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Extreme surfing contest is on
A surfing contest in Hawaii that is only held in extreme conditions is on for the first time in five years, thanks to the massive waves pounding Oahu's famed North Shore. Contest director George Downing made the announcement yesterday as wave heights at Waimea Bay reached 35 feet. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Germany **Land of chocolate**

HERMANN J. KNIPPERTZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

German confectioner Heinz Loehrer prepares chocolate trees with icing sugar powder yesterday for the Christmas period in Rheinbach, Germany.

Russian fire chief suspended

The fire chief of a Russian city where a nightclub blaze killed 119 revellers was suspended along with five subordinates yesterday and authorities said inspection records for the club appear to have been falsified.

President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin urged a broad review of fire regulations, demanding tougher enforcement and lambasting officials and businessmen for their irresponsibility.

The blaze at the Lame Horse nightclub in the city of Perm broke out early Saturday when an indoor fireworks display ignited the plastic ceiling, which was decorated with wooden branches. The blaze spread swiftly while hundreds of customers tried to flee through a single exit. Many of the victims succumbed to gases or were crushed in the throng. About 130 people were hospitalized, scores of them with severe burns. More victims died yesterday, bringing the death toll to 119, the Emergency Situations Ministry said.

"It's clear that it's criminal," an official said to the the ITAR-Tass news agency of the alleged falsification.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Official investigation

- Six fire officials including the fire chief of the city of 1 million people some 1,200 kilometres east of Moscow were suspended during the official investigation, the emergencies ministry said.

Six arrested in tunnel heist

CRIME Authorities arrested five men and one woman accused of tunnelling their way to nearly $6 million over the weekend while Brazil was gripped with soccer fever, but detectives recovered only a tiny fraction of the stolen cash, police said yesterday.

Officers surrounded the suspects in a house late Monday, and chased them when they tried to run away, Sao Paulo's public safety department said in a statement. Seized from the house was a bag of money emblazoned with the logo of the armoured car company thieves reached by tunnelling 150 metres into the firm's safe. The statement said just $2,400 was recovered, along with a van thought to have been used in the heist. Authorities said they have identified other suspects thought to have taken part in the robbery.

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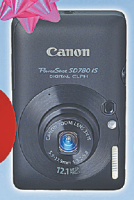

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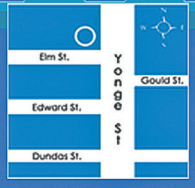

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Comment

Treading water in a 'petrostate'

TheWestView

When Stephen Harper arrives at the Copenhagen climate conference next week here's hoping security is better than it was Monday when Greenpeace managed to crawl all over the Parliament Buildings unmolested.

Good thing Greenpeace is not a terrorist organization.

The real bad boy, say environmentalists, is Canada itself. Traditionally boring at worst, we have somehow acquired the status of rogue nation, like Iran. And if you think I exaggerate, here's Guardian columnist and climate crusader George Monbiot:

"The immediate threat to the global effort to sustain a peaceful and stable world comes not from Saudi Arabia or Iran or China. It comes from Canada."

Huh?

Monbiot is shocked and appalled by Alberta's oilsands and it makes him say inflammatory things: "So here I am, watching the astonishing spectacle of a beautiful, cultured nation turning itself into a corrupt petrostate."

"Corrupt petrostate" may be a bit harsh, but we are the only signatory to the Kyoto accord to abandon our commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Instead, says Monbiot, we've actually increased by 26 per cent. The climate change performance index ranks Canada 59th out of 60, just ahead of last-place Saudi Arabia, that green paragon.

Until recently, Harper was blithely indifferent to all this climate change nonsense and wasn't planning to show up at Copenhagen. Maybe he's tired of being treated like the Kim Jong Il of climate change and doesn't want Canada declared Fossil of the Year for the third year in a row by the international environmental movement. Three-peat!

I suspect it's about what it's always about, the polls: 64 per cent of Canadians say rich nations have a responsibility to commit to tougher targets than developing countries. And Harper's plan to march lockstep with the Americans on climate has fallen flat as 81 per cent say Canada should act independently of the U.S.

So Harper's commitment to stay the corrupt petrostate course is causing him grief wherever humans breathe the air. He'll have to watch out for flying shoes and cream pies in Copenhagen. But that's all he's likely to do, as being a corrupt petrostate has its advantages, especially when the economic outlook is frostier than the weather forecast.

Meanwhile, the UN says this decade will likely be the warmest on record and as the ice melts, the oceans are rising 80 per cent higher than its 2001 forecast.

Good time to be treading water, eh?

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting; vancouverletters@metronews.ca.

Word on the street: How well did the media handle the Tiger Woods affair?

Adrien King
Toronto

A: I think there's two sides to every coin ... If you're going to be a superstar, you're subject to public scrutiny, but at the end of the day, it's his personal business, and that's nobody's business.

Emma Cassidy
Toronto

A: They've exploited it. I think it's detrimental to Tiger Woods' family and relationships ... I think it's overkill ... I think it's disrespectful and hurtful to his family.

Gerry Haley
Toronto

A: Leave the poor man alone ... With the American media, they build these people up so high and then are so quick to tear them down.

Victoria Barry
West Chezzetcook, N.S.

A: I think it was executed just fine. I liked the humour of it; I liked the jokes they made. I have no complaints.

Alex Maissan
Edmonton

A: I think it was overblown. I mean, it only lasted for a day, but I saw it everywhere I looked and it drove me bonkers. It's my personal opinion that media sensationalizes a lot of things anyway.

Amanda Bartram
Vancouver

A: I feel he has been exploited just because he is a celebrity, and if he wasn't a celebrity it wouldn't be as big of a deal. It happens all the time and I don't think it belongs in the media.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

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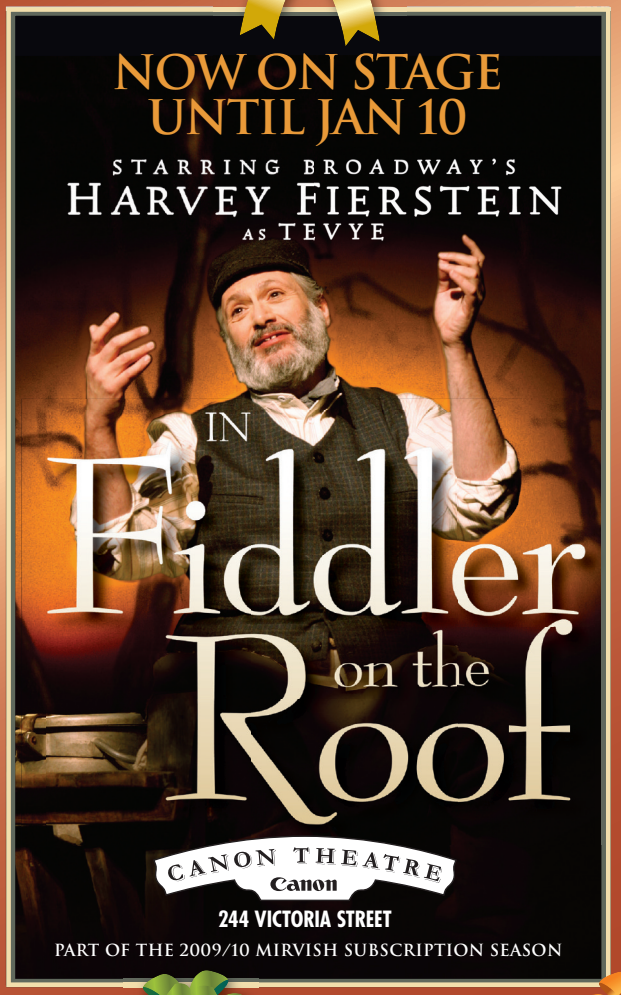

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Reitmans profit slides 17.8 per cent

Women's clothier Reitmans (Canada) Ltd. saw third-quarter profits decline 17.8 per cent to $18.9 million, or 28 cents per share, down from year-ago earnings of $23 million or 32 cents per share as the chain suffered through a continuing slump in retail spending by consumers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Scotiabank triples its net income

BANKING The Bank of Nova Scotia saw its fourth-quarter net income nearly triple but that wasn't enough to please at least one analyst, who predicted a poor reception by investors.

Scotiabank, the last of Canada's six big banks to report its fourth-quarter results, reported net income of $902 million or 83 cents per share. That was up from a year-ago net profit of $315 million or 28 cents per share.

"...the market may not view Scotia's earnings as being as positive as hoped for..."
John Aiken, analyst

"As with Royal's results, we fear that the market may not view Scotia's earnings as being as positive as hoped for based on the strong results reported previously by the other banks," Barclays Capital analyst John Aiken said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Interest rates to stay low

But Bank of Canada chief warns economy still fragile

The Bank of Canada is keeping its rates at historic lows, warning that while there are signs the economy is on the upswing, "significant fragilities remain."

Those fragilities manifested themselves in an economy that grew less than analysts expected in the third quarter of the year, and inflation that has been slightly higher than the central bank expected.

For those reasons, the Bank of Canada said yesterday its key overnight rate will remain unchanged at 0.25 per cent, effectively the lowest possible, until the end of the second quarter of 2010.

In October, the last time it pronounced on interest rates, the bank warned that a soaring loonie was undermining Canada's economic recovery to such an extent that it was more than offsetting the more favourable developments seen over the summer.

Mark Carney

"Heightened volatility and persistent strength in the Canadian dollar are working to slow growth and subdue inflation pressures," Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney said.

The strong dollar helps to keep inflation in check, since it reduces the number of dollars required to buy imported goods and services, but it also erodes international demand for Canada's exports. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Royal Bank, TD cut posted fixed-term mortgage rates

HOUSING Royal Bank of Canada is lowering its posted rates on mortgages with terms of one, four and five years, effective today. The biggest decline will be for its posted rate for one-year closed mortgages, which will drop by one-fifth of a percentage point to 3.40 per cent.

The bank is lowering its posted rate for five-year closed mortgages to 5.49 per cent and its four-year rate to 5.14 per cent.

TD Bank said it would cut its rates for four- and five-year mortgages. The bank lowered its rate for four-year closed mortgages to 5.14 per cent and its five-year closed rate to 5.49 per cent. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Other rates

- Banks may offer customers a variety of rates in addition to their posted rates.

Ericsson Laying off workers

BERTIL ERICSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

Carl-Henric Svanberg, chief executive of wireless equipment maker LM Ericsson, has the unenviable task of overseeing plans to cut almost 1,000 jobs in Sweden because an increase in production efficiency has made some work redundant. Ericsson said yesterday it will shut down operations in Gavle, where it employs 856 people, and will lay off 90 white-collar workers at its operations in Boras.

TSX slides on credit rating worries

MARKETS The Toronto stock market finished sharply lower yesterday as the resource heavy TSX was hit by sliding commodity prices as the U.S. dollar strengthened and investors also worried about downgrades to government credit ratings.

The S&P/TSX composite index dropped 120.7 points to 11,368.93.

Investor sentiment took a knock after Moody's Investor Services warned the United States and Britain must get a grip on their public finances to avoid threats to their top Triple-A credit ratings.

Analysts point out that investors are finding it tough to find reasons to send markets higher in light of the strong rally that started in early March and has gone along with hardly a break since. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dubai

- Moody's downgraded six state-linked companies in Dubai as new concerns surfaced about the troubled Arab boomtown's debt woes.

Business in brief

REVENUE Evertz Technologies, an equipment provider to the television broadcast industry, saw its fiscal second-quarter profits cut nearly in half as weakness in North America drove revenue down 20 per cent. The company announced yesterday its net income for the three months ended Oct. 31 totalled $17.5 million or 23 cents a share — compared with $34.1 million or 46 cents a share last year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Not so recession-proof after all? Supersized downturn finally catches up to McDonald's bottom line. Scan this barcode for the full story.

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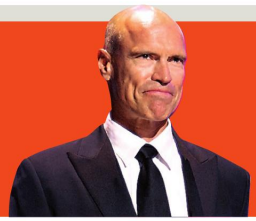
Emery to undergo surgery

Flyers goalie Ray Emery will undergo surgery today to repair a torn muscle in his lower abdomen and is expected to miss about six weeks. Philadelphia general manager Paul Holmgren made the announcement last night before the Flyers played the New York Islanders. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports



New job for Messier

The Moose is taking his next management role with the national team. Mark Messier will be named Canada's general manager for the 2010 IIHF World Hockey Championship at a press conference today, a source told The Canadian Press. THE CANADIAN PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Ambulances back at Tiger's home after his mother-in-law collapses

Tiger Woods' mother-in-law collapsed at his home and was rushed to a hospital early yesterday, touching off the second media frenzy in two weeks surrounding the pro golfer's carefully guarded private life.

Barbro Holmberg

Barbro Holmberg was taken by ambulance to Health Central Hospital with stomach pains after a 911 call from Woods' house. Holmberg, a Swedish politician, was released about 11 hours later and returned to Woods' mansion, hospital spokesman Dan Yates said.

"She was wheeled out in a wheelchair just like everyone else," Yates said.

In a recording of the 911 call obtained yesterday by The Associated Press, a panicking woman tells the dispatcher that her mother has collapsed.

"Hurry up," the woman says as a child can be heard crying in the background. "She collapsed in the bathroom. What do I do?"

A few seconds later the woman said her mother was breathing normally, talking and didn't appear to be hurt from her fall.

The caller wasn't identified. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Leafs strike upbeat tone

Wilson says he expects team to make run at playoffs

It was the kind of moment where Toronto Maple Leafs coach Ron Wilson couldn't help but feel a little optimistic.

Standing in front of hundreds of kids on an outdoor rink yesterday he told the crowd that he expects his 29th-place team to make a run at the playoffs.

"Just keep believing," Wilson said. "I think we're eventually going to get there."

There is an undeniably good vibe around a team that has gone 6-1-2 over its past nine games and is starting to narrow the gap between itself and eighth place in the Eastern Conference. The Leafs were still five points back of Tampa heading into play yesterday, but the mountain no longer seems too high to climb.

With the team in good spirits, the timing of its annual outdoor practice couldn't have been much better.

Players wore neck warmers on a crisp December afternoon and heard chants of "Go Leafs Go!" while being put through their paces. Less than 24 hours after a 5-2 victory over Atlanta, everyone was feeling good.

"It's easy to come here today and have some smiles on our faces," said defenceman Francois Beauchemin.

Smiles were much tougher to find back in October, when the Leafs dug themselves a big hole by starting the season 0-7-1. The rough stretch has left little room for error the rest of the way.

Toronto is targeting December as a crucial month to make a move in the standings. With the team essentially playing every other day, it has a chance to pile up some points in a hurry. THE CANADIAN PRESS

CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Maple Leafs goaltender Vesa Toskala chats with schoolchildren yesterday at an outdoor practice held by the team in downtown Toronto.

Game at BMO Field proposed

- The Maple Leafs are looking to host an outdoor winter game at BMO Field. Toronto GM Brian Burke made the pitch to NHL commissioner Gary Bettman a month ago, along with pitches for the draft and the all-star game to come to Toronto.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Wright's big three leads Raps to third straight win

Antoine Wright hit a critical three-pointer with just more than a minute remaining as the Toronto Raptors continued their mastery over the Minnesota Timberwolves with a 94-88 win last night.

Chris Bosh led the way with 21 points and 16 rebounds for the Raptors (10-13), who have won 11 straight meetings against the Timberwolves dating back to 2004.

Jarrett Jack had 17 points, Hedo Turkoglu added 16, while Andrea Bargnani and DeMar DeRozan chipped in with 15 apiece as Toronto won its third straight for the first time this season.

Kevin Love had 18 points off the bench to pace Minnesota (3-18), which lost for the third time in four games. Jonny Flynn scored 11 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter, while Ryan Gomes added 16 in defeat.

After Minnesota rallied from a late six-point deficit to tie the game 84-84, Turkoglu stole an errant pass and went in for an uncontested dunk. Toronto stopped the Timberwolves at the other end, and Wright buried a three — Toronto's second in 21 attempts — to send the Air Canada Centre crowd of 15,167 into a frenzy.

Jack was Toronto's most complete player last night, adding eight assists and seven rebounds in place of starting point guard Jose Calderon, who missed the game with a sore left hip.

Calderon, who had started every game for Toronto this season, suffered the injury in Saturday's 110-78 victory over the Bulls in Chicago. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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NAME	LOCATION	GP	G	A	PTS
1. Joanne Doiron	NB, CA	415	173	256	429
2. Christian Gagnon	NB, CA	417	175	248	423
3. Kyle Turk	NS, CA	421	194	225	419
4. Cole Warren	NS, CA	422	151	267	418
4. Steve Ferguson	ON, CA	421	174	244	418
6. Jonathon Gremsperger	BC, CA	418	180	233	413
6. Kelly Wrishko	AB, CA	417	171	242	413
6. Paula Almeida-Stille		421	173	240	413
6. Stephen Stille	ON, CA	421	173	240	413
10. Rick Kit	ON, CA	417	179	232	411
11. Shawn Tschritter	AB, CA	417	171	239	410
12. Jean-Paul Osborne	QC, CA	413	169	238	407
13. Brian B	AB, CA	417	173	233	406
13. Claude Brunelle	BC, CA	424	167	239	406
13. Sarah Jackson	ON, CA	409	162	244	406

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It's better to give than to receive

Couture to fight Coleman at UFC 109
UFC Hall of Famers Randy (The Natural) Couture and Mark (The Hammer) Coleman will face off at UFC 109 on Feb. 6 in Las Vegas, the UFC confirmed Monday. The two were originally slated to meet 11 years ago at UFC 17, but the matchup was called off due to injury. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Leafs need nothing short of miracle

To make the playoffs, Toronto's going to need a lot of help from the rest of the Eastern Conference

TheHockeyNews
Adam Proteau
thehockeynews.com

There's a shoe-selling slogan currently airing on TV that theorizes, "impossible is nothing." The Toronto Maple Leafs would love to confirm that theory as they attempt to rebound from an abominable start to the season and make the playoffs for the first time since 2004.

Trouble is, it's almost a certainty they won't be able to do so.

Granted, Brian Burke's Blue and White bunch has been bolstered by improved play in recent weeks.

Much to the chagrin of Boston Bruins fans, no longer do the Leafs appear destined for 30th place in the league's final standings; heck, they may even leapfrog four or five franchises and ascend to the fringes of the post-season picture before Spring rolls around.

Unfortunately, in beginning the year so poorly, the Leafs not only have placed a huge burden on their collective shoulders, they also now need just about every other Eastern Conference team to help them out, if they wish to sneak into the playoffs.

"... A miracle is precisely what it will take for the Leafs to be playing meaningful hockey in May and June."

Thanks to the NHL's hare-brained points system that awards a point to any team that makes it past three periods of regulation hockey before losing a game, the task of overtaking opponents ahead of you in the standings is monumental to say the least.

Therefore, Toronto must (a) emerge victorious over as many Eastern teams — and in regulation time — as possible; and (b) hope the grand majority of games played by Eastern opponents end after 60 minutes of play.

Statistics from the early portion of this season indicate the latter simply isn't going to happen: as chronicled in November by THN Senior Writer Ken Campbell, the NHL was on course this year to have a total of 331 games that extended into overtime. That's 49 more overtime games than the previous mark of 282 that was set last season.

If you're a Leafs fan, that's not good.

Nobody is insinuating Ron Wilson and his charges can't pull off a miracle. But make no mistake — a miracle is precisely what it will take for the Leafs to be playing meaningful hockey in May and June.

The Hockey News thn.com

Knowing East is up for grabs has Bills feeling even worse

NFL Kyle Williams doesn't mince words when assessing the Buffalo Bills' near season-long run of fourth-quarter collapses.

To put it bluntly, the defensive tackle said Monday, if not for "our own stupidity," Buffalo (4-8) might still have more to play for entering the final month of the season. Instead, the Bills are all but mathematically eliminated from playoff contention in a year in which the AFC East race is suddenly up for grabs with New England (7-5) struggling to hold onto first place.

Kyle Williams

"It's a bad time to have lost a lot of games in the fourth quarter because the division's right there," Williams said. "I think above all else, that's what really kind of sticks in your craw. To know that everything was so close, and the way things are shaking out in the division that, other than our own stupidity, we could've been there."

Williams' frustrations boiled over as the team returned to practice following a three-day break after a 19-13 loss to the Jets in Toronto last Thursday night. Buffalo prepares for a game between two AFC also-rans at Kansas City (3-9) this weekend.

The loss to the Jets followed an all-too-familiar story line in which the Bills failed to overcome a six-point deficit to start the fourth quarter.

The Buffalo defence gave up an eight-play, 34-yard drive that allowed New York to go up 19-10 on Jay Feely's 37-yard field goal early into the final period. And their offence managed 35 yards and four first-downs in the entire second half.

Of Buffalo's eight losses, seven have come in which the team either led, was tied or within one score of the lead entering the final quarter.

Buffalo is likely to miss the playoffs for a 10th straight year, matching Detroit for the NFL's longest active drought.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Give yourself the phone you've always wanted

Season over for Portis
The Washington Redskins placed running back Clinton Portis on injured reserve yesterday, ending his season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Hideous' rocks the centre of controversy

Players finding fault with equipment at curling trials

In a game where even a speck of dust can influence the final outcome, problems with something as significant as the curling rocks can prove to be a disaster.

The buzz at the Canadian Olympic curling trials is circulating around one set of yellow curling stones on Sheet A, which is causing nightmares for skips attempting to represent Canada at the 2010 Winter Olympics.

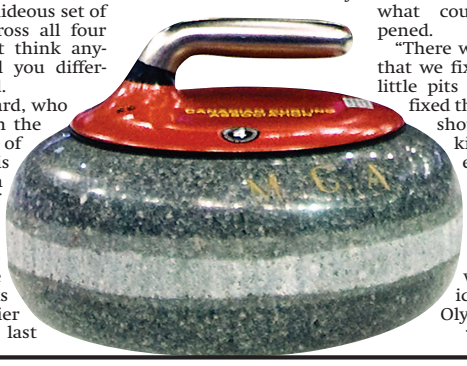
"The ice is perfect but the rocks are hideous. They decided to go with a set of rocks they thought they knew and those rocks are just worn out," said former Brier and world champion Wayne Middaugh, moments after losing 7-3 to Edmonton's Kevin Martin and watching his record drop to 0-3.

"They're a hideous set of rocks and across all four sheets I don't think anybody will tell you different," he added.

Glenn Howard, who struggled with the same set of rocks in his opening win over Jeff Stoughton Sunday, said it's hard to believe these are the same rocks used at the Brier in Calgary last March.

"It was a tough set. It was one of the toughest sets we played with this year but I'm kind of proud of the fact we won the game," Howard said. "We knew what the rocks were doing and we adjusted accordingly."

Said Martin: "I really wish the players had more say in the equipment we throw with and use. It's really hard if you look at it from a player's perspective."



The head ice technician at the event, Hans Wuthrich, hadn't heard there was a problem and was at a loss to explain what could have happened.

"There were some rocks that we fixed — they had little pits in them so we fixed them — but there shouldn't be those kind of differences in those rocks. I don't know where that's coming from or why," said Wuthrich, who is making ice at the Olympics.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Results

- Cheryl Bernard picked up her fourth straight victory at the Canadian Olympic curling trials yesterday, stealing four from Kelly Scott in the 10th end to seal a 9-7 win. In other action, defending women's national champion Jennifer Jones of Winnipeg picked up her second consecutive win with a 9-7 victory over Calgary's Crystal Webster.
- Glenn Howard remains the only unbeaten men's team at the Canadian Olympic curling trials. Howard, of Coldwater, Ont., improved to 3-0 after dumping 25-year-old Jason Gunnlaugson 6-4 yesterday at Rexall Place. Edmonton's Kevin Koe suffered his first defeat. He dropped a 6-5 decision to Jeff Stoughton of Winnipeg.

Thrashers out to make the hockey world 'aware'

NHL The Atlanta Thrashers are looking forward to a little attention.

Despite being one of the NHL's feel-good stories this season, the team doesn't always get recognized for its accomplishments. That should change temporarily during a week that sees the Thrashers face four Canadian opponents — three of them on the road.

"I think it's a stage for us," Atlanta coach John Anderson said in Toronto Monday. "Obviously, you see all the media here. When I talk to media at home, there's maybe one or two people.

"I think that our guys feel like it's a centre stage and it's a platform ... to make the rest of the hockey world aware that we do play some good hockey down in Atlanta."

The trip didn't get off to a very good start, with the Thrashers dropping a 5-2 decision to the Maple Leafs at Air Canada Centre Monday night.

But the team is still one of the NHL's best road clubs with a 9-3-1 record.

Atlanta makes a stop in Calgary tonight before visiting Vancouver tomorrow. It then returns home for a game against Montreal Saturday night.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sports in brief

TRADE The Columbus Blue Jackets have acquired defenceman Brendan Bell and forward Tomas Kana from the St. Louis Blues in exchange for forward Pascal Pelletier. Columbus general manager Scott Howson announced the trade yesterday.

OLYMPIC HOCKEY Steve Yzerman is going to name Team Canada a day earlier than expected. Hockey Canada confirmed yesterday that it has changed the Olympic announcement to the morning of Dec. 30. It had originally been scheduled for New Year's Eve.

BIG UNIT Randy Johnson's agent says the Big Unit is still weighing his decision about whether to pitch again in 2010 or retire after 22 major league seasons. Alan Nero, speaking from the winter meetings in Indianapolis, expects to know in the coming weeks whether the 46-year-old Johnson will return for another year.

NFL The chip-shot miss against the New Orleans Saints has cost Canadian kicker Shaun Suisham his job with the Washington Redskins. Suisham, of Wallaceburg, Ont., was cut by the Redskins, who replaced him with Graham Gano from the United Football League. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Teahen reaches deal with White Sox

Third baseman Mark Teahen agreed yesterday to a $14-million US, three-year deal with the Chicago White Sox. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yanks near big trade

Instead of spending at these winter meetings, the New York Yankees are in a dealing mode.

The World Series champions pulled off the first big trade of this year's session, reaching a tentative agreement yesterday on a three-team, seven-player swap that would bring them all-star centre-fielder Curtis Granderson from Detroit.

New York would trade right-hander Ian Kennedy to Arizona, and lefty reliever Phil Coke and outfield prospect Austin Jackson to Detroit, a baseball official said on condition of anonymity because the deal was not yet final.

Detroit would ship all-star pitcher Edwin Jackson to the Diamondbacks, and Arizona would send touted young pitchers Max Scherzer and Daniel Schlereth to the Tigers. The teams were still working on technical aspects of the trade, the official said, including checking medical records.

The speedy Granderson would displace Melky Cabrera as centre-fielder on the Yankees. Cabrera could shift to left, depending on whether New York re-signs Johnny Damon or designated hitter Hideki Matsui.

Granderson was a first-time all-star last season, when he had 30 homers, 71 RBIs and 20 steals.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Money issues?

- Detroit may be looking to cut payroll after a big attendance drop this year at Comerica Park. Granderson is owed $23.75 million US over the next three years.

Still some kinks in Packers' game

NFL Their defence is on the rise, their offence is doing a better job protecting oft-hit quarterback Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers have won four straight games to put themselves in solid shape for the playoffs.

But Monday night's victory over the Baltimore Ravens showed a few of the problems that have hounded the Packers (8-4) all season might not be going away. They're still drawing an alarming number of penalties, and their special teams seem to choose the worst possible moments to melt down.

The Packers are running out of time to solve those problems before the playoffs, but they are getting much better at bouncing back from their mistakes.

"We didn't lay it down," tight end Jermichael Finley said. "Teams have known for us to lay it down in the second half, and we didn't do that."

The Packers came into the season with playoff expectations. But they got off to a disappointing 4-4 start, giving up too many sacks, drawing penalties and allowing long returns at critical points in games.

However, the Packers gave up only one sack to the Ravens Monday night and have allowed just four in their last three games. Their defence is clearly getting more comfortable with defensive co-ordinator Dom Capers' 3-4 scheme.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JONATHAN DANIEL/GETTY IMAGES

Green Bay's Aaron Rodgers escapes the Baltimore pass rush during Monday's game. The Packers beat the visiting Ravens 27-17.

Sports in brief

SOCCER Bayern Munich scored two goals in each half yesterday to beat Juventus 4-1 and advance to the knockout round of the Champions League. Elsewhere in Champions League action, it was Manchester United 3 Wolfsburg 1, Real Madrid 3 Marseille 1, and Chelsea 2 APOEL Nicosia 2.

HOCKEY Canadian scoring star Cody Hodgson will miss the world junior championship with a back injury. The 19-year-old informed Hockey Canada yesterday that he will not be able to participate in a selection camp that begins Saturday in Regina, and won't play in the Dec. 26-Jan. 5 tournament in Regina and Saskatoon.

FOOTBALL Alabama's Rolando McClain won the Butkus Award as U.S. college football's top linebacker. He was presented the award yesterday morning in a surprise visit by Dick Butkus, a Hall of Fame linebacker and the award's namesake.

BASEBALL Chone Figgins and the Seattle Mariners have finalized their $36-million US, four-year contract. The deal for the former Los Angeles Angels sparkplug includes a vesting option for 2014 that could make it worth $45 million over five years.

NASCAR Danica Patrick signed with JR Motorsports yesterday to give NASCAR a try, but her schedule in the second-tier Nationwide Series has yet to be determined. Patrick will make her stock car racing debut in the Feb. 6 ARCA race at Daytona International Speedway.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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NBA

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Universities remain cautious despite endowment rebounds

Due to a rebound in financial markets, Canadian university endowment funds have recouped much of the losses they suffered during the downturn. Despite gains, universities remain cautious about endowment spending and will continue with the money-saving measures according to University Affairs. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

Ontario Colleges' worldly goal

In a new position paper from Colleges Ontario, the presidents of the province's 24 colleges propose the Ontario government adopt four goals to successfully implement a new vision for higher education in the province. These goals include improving student mobility and expanding student choice and aligning PSE with the needs of the transforming economy. The goal, the report states, is to make Ontario a world leader in PSE. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Workology in **brief**

MCMASTER'S PITCH FOR ISOTOPE-PRODUCING REACTOR REJECTED: According to the Hamilton Spectator, an expert panel advising the federal government has ruled out McMaster University's nuclear reactor as a long-term solution to the medical isotope shortage. Earlier this year, McMaster presented to a federal committee a $30-million plan for its reactor to produce medical isotopes. McMaster's reactor could still be considered a short-term option. The major reason the university's reactor was excluded as a permanent solution is that it uses highly enriched uranium. Although HEU optimizes production of isotopes, it can also be used in nuclear weapons.

GENDER GAP ON CAMPUS COULD HAVE PROFOUND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS: According to the Globe and Mail, on Canadian campuses, there are now three female undergraduates for every two male students, and a recent UNESCO study found more women than men have graduated with post-secondary degrees in 75 of 98 nations. This trend could have profound social ramifications, experts say. Women are expected to obtain more power in public and corporate life and more financial independence, and researchers suspect more women may forgo the traditional family. Some university leaders say the gender gap reflects a larger societal puzzle in which boys lag behind girls in academic achievement long before reaching PSE.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

The best Santa you can be

'Tis the **Season**

Over the next few weeks Metro's Workology section will be shining a light on some of the jobs that pop up around the holiday season and dissappear just as quickly afterwards. Check back every Wednesday.

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

Jennifer Andrews is not a white-bearded, elderly man. "I'm not a jolly fat guy at all!" she laughs, but the 37-year-old is Head Elf at the Santa School, a world-renowned training centre for top Santas.

Based in Calgary, the Santa School draws Father Christmases from all over Canada and the U.S., teaches them the secrets of St. Nick, then dispatches them across the continent and beyond, including to the U.K. and Hong Kong.

The school was founded by Victor Nevada, but when he passed away in March, Andrews stepped up to "carry the candy cane."

The school offers a three-pronged approach. "We train Santas, we supply outfits and accessories for Santas, and we book out Santas," Andrews explains. "What makes a Santa great is what's in his heart, but you can't train that. What we train them to do is … how to give the full show when they walk through the door."

Santa's got to smell right, look "regal" and keep his beard bushy. Professional actors and voice coaches ensure the ho-ho-hos have a North Pole accent.

"We don't want cookie-cutter Santas. We want them to be their own genuine version of that character, because Santa can't be everywhere all the time," she says. "He's a busy guy."

They also train elves and Mrs. Clauses and bring in real reindeer so the L.A. and Miami Santas can "reunite" with their coworkers for photos. The school goes into overdrive to meet the fall need for new Santas and is planning to start offering a spring course to keep up with demand.

Gerald Cooper could probably set up a Santa school of his own: He's been slipping into the big red suit since the 1950s. The 74-year-old and his wife, Betty, team up as Mr. and Mrs. Claus around Halifax. He loves community centres and hospitals, but swore off shopping malls years ago.

"You sit there with this warm suit on for one full hour, and it's a steady stream of kids sitting on your lap," he recalls. He prefers the quality time of a guest appearance. He advises Santas to keep it short: 15 minutes is all you need to bring the cheer.

He's had a lot of surprising requests for Christmas gifts, including a woman who confided: "Santa, I'd like a man."

No word on what came down her chimney that year.

Santa school tips

- Stay in character the whole time.
- Have the right outfit.
- Practise your Ho-ho-hos.
- Remember: It's all about the love.

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GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE
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High school completion rate of Aboriginal students in B.C. hit 49 per cent
According to B.C. figures, the high school completion rate among Aboriginal students reached 49 per cent this year, gains the provincial government are pleased with. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Yum, what a delicious looking ... bar of soap?

BRIAN COULTON
for Metro Canada

Passers-by of Thomas Tam's store-cum-studio in Liberty Village might be mistaken if they simply glance through its windows to the brightly lit, retro-inspired boutique.

With dark cinnamon rolls crowned with white swirls, fruit-topped cakes, gingerbread men and light pastel-coloured macaroons on display under large glass lids, it looks like a sweet tooth's paradise with a candy store vibe.

But Tam's desserts aren't for the palate. They're the products of his recently opened Demo Soap Studio: Inedible bars of soap veiled as mouth-watering bars, pies, cookies and other treats.

The concept is one Tam has perfected over 10 years in the soap industry. After developing an interest in the contents of what he puts in and on his body during the mid-1990s, Tam began experimenting with skin-friendly soap making, and selling his creations vendor-style at St. Lawrence Market, the Distillery District, the annual One of a Kind Show and at Solstice — the store he opened with two partners.

Info

- Visit Demo in-store at 171 East Liberty St., Suite 123 or online at demosoap.com

"It was more like a hobby at the beginning," recalls Tam, "Then we started to make more and more and realized, maybe we should start something and see what happens!"

After a run with Solstice, Tam ventured out on his own in 2003, establishing Demo, initially as a wholesaler. While mining his brain for a singular soap concept, Tam's love of food popped into his mind, birthing the Demo métier.

"If you do something too unique, it's so rare and you find it harder to get to the general public," said Tam, "There's nothing more interesting than food and everybody will have the same idea of what food is."

Everybody also has the same idea of who makes the biggest suds in the soap business. In an industry worth nearly $2-billion annually in Canada, it's clear why big cosmetics companies like The Body Shop, LUSH and new kid on the block Bath & Body Works vie for a portion.

But Tam believes there's a slice of that pie for Demo. "I try to keep everything more unique and personalized. Other, big companies can't do that," he said, "They cannot show you how to make their product in front of your eyes."

Demo's distinction is evident in the personal touches Tam adds, like a sprinkling of gold flakes inspired by observing the same treatment of pastries in Tokyo, and his high-selling fortune cookie soap, which features customizable fortunes tucked inside.

"They're such unique gifts you can't find anywhere else in the world, which is awesome," he said. "Whatever other people do, I just don't do. That's the key of my business. If they find it different, that's good."

PHOTOS: BRIAN COULTON/FOR METRO CANADA

Demo Soap Studio specializes in making its soap look good enough to eat.

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Red River College president to head Sheridan

Sheridan College in Oakville, Ont., announced yesterday that Dr. Jeff Zabudsky has been appointed president and CEO of the institution. He succeeds Dr. Robert Turner, who is retiring after leading the school since 2001. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Office parties: To go, or not to go

Dragons' Den

Kevin O'Leary wishes you a happy holiday season. This column will be taking a break until the show starts up in January.

This is the season to party it up! Company holiday parties ain't what they used to be, thanks to the economic downturn. They've actually been winding down for some time now, with employers' dawning realization that getting staff liquored up isn't really the best idea at any time of year. Bill's off-colour jokes and Sally's stripper dance moves were probably best kept to their personal lives.

But is workplace socializing a good idea in the first place?

Arlene Dickinson says yes. She's the sole female on the panel of Dragons' Den, bringing not only a woman's perspective to the business ideas that get pitched, but also a marketer's viewpoint. Her firm Venture Communications has expanded beyond Calgary to offices in Toronto and Ottawa.

"My company has a regular social outing," says Arlene. "Every Thursday we shut down at 4 p.m., and head out of the office to spend some time together, to celebrate something that we've achieved as an organization that week." She picks up the tab.

Arlene acknowledges that not everybody is social by nature, but she believes this type of team-building exercise contributes to the company's success.

"It helps the culture of an organization," she says. "There's no big structure to our get-togethers — it's just a chance for everyone to take a breath, and get to know each other."

The Dragons' Den staff has certainly built a strong team spirit, in part through socializing at "Health and Safety" meetings, the code-name for our outings! And the result is on display tonight on television — an entertaining, informative show that requires plenty of creativity and hard work. The holiday theme of tonight's episode didn't stop the Dragons from insulting each other even more than usual — and the production team will be watching at the executive producer's home!

Dianne Buckner hosts Gemini-winning show Dragons' Den. She's also a weekend anchor on the CBC News Network. Dragons' Den airs tonight at 8 p.m. on CBC.

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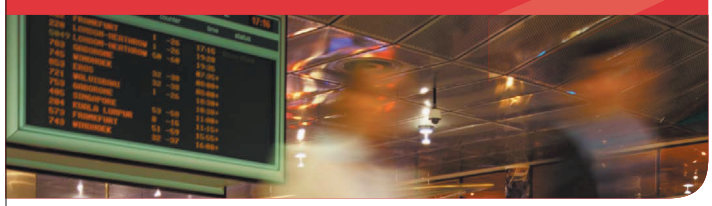

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†0% APR Purchase Financing is available on all new 2010 Mazda vehicles. Based on a representative agreement using an MSRP of $15,995/$16,995/$20,495/$23,195/$23,450 for the new 2010 Mazda3 GX (D4XS50AA00)/2010 Mazda3 Sport GX (D5XS50AA00)/2010 Mazda5 GS (E6SD50AA00)/2010 Mazda6 GS-I4 (G4SY60AA00)/2010 Mazda Tribute GX-I4 2WD (WVXD50AA00) with a financed amount of $15,000/$15,000/$20,000/$20,000/$20,000, the cost of borrowing for a 48/48/36/36/48-month term is $0, monthly payment is $312.50/$312.50/$555.56/$555.56/$416.67, total finance obligation is $15,000/$15,000/$20,000/$20,000/$20,000. ‡Electing to take the 0% Purchase Finance Offer in place of the Cash Purchase Credit Offer results in the calculation of the Equivalent APR disclosed. This disclosure is intended to help you make an informed comparison between these two alternative offers. The Equivalent APR as set out does not change the actual monthly payment to be made or the actual financed amount to be repaid as set out above. ††No purchase necessary for test drive prizes. Register at mazdagotime.ca and complete your test drive on or before January 4, 2010. Open to legal residents of Canada over the age of majority with a valid driver's licence. Pre-paid Mazda Cash card test drive prizes and odds at start of contest: $25 (3:4); $50 (1:5); and $100 (1:20). Test drive prizes may be converted ($250; $500; or $1,000 respectively) to credit against signed contract for purchase of Mazda vehicle made on or before January 4, 2010. Limit one prize or credit per person/corresponding driver's licence. Skill-testing question required. Full rules at mazdagotime.ca. ‡‡Mazda5 "Better Drive Dividend" is available only to customers recycling 1995 model year (or older) vehicles and who have an official Retire your Ride Program thank-you letter and ID Code. For program details go to **www.mazda.ca** and see **www.retireyourride.ca**. **Event MSRP on Cash Purchases for new 2010 Mazda3 GX (D4XS50AA00)/2010 Mazda3 Sport GX (D5XS50AA00)/2010 Mazda5 GS (E6SD50AA00)/2010 Mazda6 GS-I4 (G4SY60AA00)/2010 Mazda Tribute GX-I4 2WD (WVXD50AA00) is $14,495 ($15,995 less $1,500 Event Bonus)/$15,495 ($16,995 less $1,500 Event Bonus)/$18,495 ($20,495 less $2,000 Event Bonus)/$20,995 ($23,195 less $2,200 Event Bonus)/$20,950 ($23,450 less $2,500 Event Bonus). As shown, MSRP for 2010 Mazda3 GT (D4TY60AB00)/2010 Mazda3 Sport GT (D5TY60AA00)/2010 Mazda5 GT (E6TD50AA00)/2010 Mazda6 GT-V6 (G4TB80AA00)/2010 Mazda Tribute GT-V6 AWD (WXTZ70AA00) is $23,890/$23,995/$24,295/$36,695/$34,995. ♦2010 Mazda3/2010 Mazda3 Sport/2010 Mazda6/2010 Mazda Tribute models tested with standard side-impact air bags (SABs). U.S. Government star ratings are part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (www.safercar.gov). ▼Based on Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Offers available from November 16, 2009 until January 4, 2010. All offers exclude $1,395 freight and P.D.E. for all 2010 Mazda3/Mazda3 Sport models and $1,595 freight and P.D.E for all 2010 Mazda5/Mazda6/Mazda Tribute models. $65 PPSA, $5 OMVIC transaction fee, licence, insurance, taxes, down payment. Other dealer charges may be required at the time of purchase. Lease and Finance on approved credit for qualified customers only. Dealer may sell for less. Dealer order may be necessary. Visit mazda.ca or see your dealer for complete details.

MADD rates impaired driving laws
Ontario has taken the top honours for effective impaired driving laws, while Nunavut was the worst in ratings by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). **CANADIANDRIVER.COM**

Metro Drive

Audi's green win

For the second year in a row, Green Car Journal has named a German diesel Green Car of the Year. The 42-mpg Audi A3 TDI topped a field that included three hybrids and two diesels to take the award presented at the Los Angeles Auto Show. **WIRED.COM**

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

Outback's come a long way

Mix of wagon and sport-ute Subaru's winning combo

MARK ATKINSON
for Metro Canada

Who can forget those mid-'90s ads starring Aussie actor Paul Hogan shilling for some car company you'd never really heard from before? And that Outback thing he was pushing? It promised more room, better handling and less fuel consumption compared to the best-selling Ford Explorers and Jeep Grand Cherokees of the time. Seemed very cheeky for a station wagon on stilts to suggest it could keep up with the traditional body-on-frame SUVs that dominated the sales charts.

The 2010 Subaru Outback was named the Best New SUV/CUV under $35K at the Automotive Journalists Association of Canada Awards.

Fast forward 15 years, and the Outback is hitting its fourth generation in stride, but still maintaining the same mission as before: to offer the space, performance and abilities of a sport-ute in the silhouette and footprint of a station wagon.

The new 2010 Outback — named the Best New SUV/CUV under $35K at the Automotive Journalists Association of Canada Awards — remains based on the Legacy sedan, which means that its footprint is longer and wider than before. Taller too.

Most Outbacks receive power from a revised 2.5-litre four-cylinder boxer engine that produces 170 hp. In the base car, that engine receives a PZEV (Partial Zero Emissions Vehicle) rating, which is ideal for the environmentally conscious crew. The 2.5 receives two new transmissions for 2010: a standard six-speed manual, and the company's new continually variable transmission (CVT). The Lineartronic CVT uses a chain rather than a belt to improve power delivery, and on the road, the standard steering-wheel-mounted paddle shifters give the driver more than enough control on the road.

Since the 2.5-litre turbo engine is gone for 2010, the Outback receives the newly enlarged 3.6-litre six-cylinder producing 256 hp, which only comes with a five-speed automatic transmission.

To tackle the rough stuff, every Outback uses Subaru's full-time "symmetrical" all-wheel drive system, and the revised suspension now rides higher than before, giving more ground clearance than most "real" SUVs. The Outback doesn't feel tippy when driving. Its ability to negotiate rough gravel roads and washouts is highly impressive.

Inside, Subaru has delivered a spacious cabin with improved materials and excellent levels of standard convenience and safety equipment, including a plug-and-play USB audio system.

Subaru has delivered a spacious cabin with improved materials and excellent levels of convenience and safety equipment.

Every Outback delivers huge cargo space thanks to a revised rear suspension that intrudes less into the body.

Pricing starts at $28,995 for the 2.5i PZEV — over $2,000 less than the outgoing '09 — while the 3.6R starts at $35,695.

Subaru has delivered a larger, more capable vehicle with more equipment and are offering it at a lower price. It makes me wonder if we'll see Crocodile Dundee back behind the wheel anytime soon?

2010 Subaru Outback

Type: Sport utility vehicle
Price: from $28,995
Engine: 2.5L four cylinder
HP: 170

Highlights

- Combination of sporty utility and station wagon
- Huge cargo space
- Steady on off-roading

2011 Toyota Sienna.

Sienna revamped for 2011

NEW MODEL An all new, third generation, 2011 Toyota Sienna was unveiled recently at the 2009 Los Angeles Auto Show.

The new Sienna continues to be the only vehicle in its segment that offers an all-wheel-drive option — ideal for a changing Canadian climate.

The new model will offer innovative firsts in versatility, refinement, comfort, and entertainment. With the choice of eight models, two powertrains and drivetrains, flexible seating, second row ottoman seating, a wide split-screen entertainment system, and a multi-panel panoramic moonroof, Sienna drivers will be delighted by the made to measure philosophy behind the new model.

"The new Sienna is the perfect vehicle for Canadians with busy lifestyles — those who need a vehicle that can switch effortlessly between several roles, day in and day out," said Warren Orton, director, Toyota Canada Inc.

The Sienna was designed by Toyota's Calty Design Research and developed at Toyota Technical Center in Ann Arbor, Mich.

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Infiniti M unveiled

Infiniti recently unveiled the all-new 2011 Infiniti M sedan. Scheduled to go on sale in Canada in late March 2010, it will be available in two model designations. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

C-word in time of Copenhagen

AutoPilot

Michael Goetz

metronews.ca/autopilot

Canada Customs has just issued a new travel advisory: Don't drag up and down the streets of Copenhagen in a crew-cab pickup with Alberta plates. Maybe even leave your sealskin fur hat at home this time, and certainly keep tire smoking burnouts to a minimum.

Apparently Copenhagen is currently hosting some kind of UN conference about something called "climate change," and many attendees are not blowing kisses in Canada's direction.

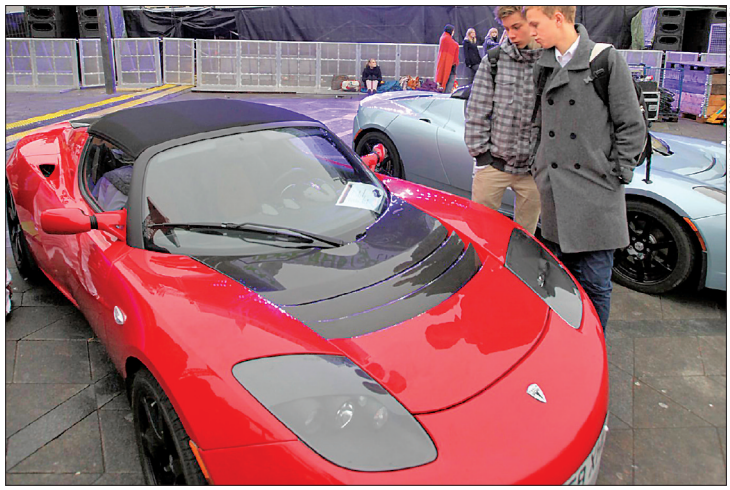
They don't like our tar sands, they don't like it that we've already stated that we'll only sign what the Americans sign, and they particularly don't like the audacity of us publishing an Anne of Green Gables prequel.

An unofficial group made of non-government types, even awarded Canada the first "Fossil of the Day" award, given each day to a country that, in its estimation, is adept at blocking progress at climate summits.

There are lots of flash points to this issue, which could be debated until those methane-producing cows come home, but I'm more interested in how Canadian automobile users feel at this juncture. Do you suddenly feel like you have a target on your bumper? Is this weighing on your soul?

Making choices you can live with has a big bearing on how you feel, and I think drivers sometimes forget that our choices are not limited to driving. The choices we make in other aspects of our lives could even have more impact on global warming than our driving habits.

First, let's go over that carbon dioxide deal again. Carbon dioxide (CO2) is not the only contributor to global warming, but it is by far the biggest one. CO2 is released into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels, by decaying and/or burning wood, and by disturbances in the soil's carbon-holding organic matter, through erosion, plowing, mining, etc.



PETER DEJONG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

People look at the Tesla roadster, an all-electric sports car, on display near the Climate Conference in Copenhagen on Monday.

When it comes to man-made causes of CO2, the percentage attributed to passenger cars, pick-up trucks, SUVs, vans, and minivans is about 12-13, according to a 2006 air pollutants study by Environment Canada.

A good-sized chunk, but there other equal or larger chunks — the energy sector accounts for about 52 per cent, transportation (other than light vehicles) accounts for about 13 percent, agriculture about eight per cent, industry about seven per cent, land use about four per cent, and waste about three per cent.

Some advocate that curtailing air travel would have a huge effect, as it produces lots of CO2, and there are less foreseeable ways of increasing its efficiency (nobody, for instance, seems quite ready to board an electric plane for an overseas flight).

"Do you suddenly feel like you have a target on your bumper?"

It's all about priorities. If you need or love to drive, still do it, but maybe do it a bit more responsibly, and maybe check off a few items from the other list, to balance things out a bit — like take less airplane trips, buy more local products, make your house more efficient, burn less wood in the fireplace.

And maybe make that special effort this year to not set off any huge scrap-tire fires, because, as you know, it all adds up.

Michael Goetz has been writing about cars and editing automotive publications for over 20 years. He lives in Toronto with his family and a neglected 1967 Jaguar E-type.

Artisan cars cater to deep pockets

RYAN BORROFF
Metro World News

You get what you pay for, or so it's said. The world's elite is buying hand-built cars again and price is no object.

Modern car production lines might construct cars as speedily as possible, trading traditional techniques for production efficiency, but the world's finest manufacturers still lovingly craft each car, using traditional coachbuilding methods that ensure a degree of quality, attention to detail and exclusivity that mass automization can't deliver.

Exclusive options

- **The Tramontana R** is quirky, exclusive and fast, constructed from super lightweight carbon fibre and only 12 people can get their hands on one each year. Price: 385,000 Euros
- **The Koenigsegg CCXR** is the world's most expensive biofuel supercar. It produces over 1,000 hp and tops out at more than 250 mph. Price: 1.5 million Euros

The Morgan Motor Company has always assembled its cars by hand and Morgan's latest car, the Aero SuperSports is its most exclusive yet. Hand-finished from aircraft-style super-formed lightweight aluminium, the interior features polished hardwoods and hand-stitched leather. As only 200 will be built when the car enters production next year at a price of 140,000 Euros, there will be more customers than cars.

For even greater exclusivity, Aston Martin will build only 77 of its latest creation, the masterly One-77. The most hand-built Aston yet, its aluminium body panels will be rolled by hand and constructed upon a lightweight, rigid carbon fibre monocoque tub. For those few fortunate owners of the One-77, Aston Martin engineers will tune the car's suspension to suit the exacting requirements of each of the cars' owners. The One-77 will cost an estimated 1,300,000 Euros.

The custom-built Pininfarina Hyperion

Of course, if customising your own car from a super-limited hand-built production of 200 or even 77 cars is still not exclusive enough for you, you can always have a car built from scratch. Italian coachbuilder Pininfarina, who has learnt a thing or two about building one-off vehicles over its 80-year history, has a Special Projects Division that creates bespoke cars from the underpinnings of production models. Cars like the Hyperion, a one-off custom-built car derived from the Rolls-Royce Drophead Coupé was built for a private customer from carbon fibre and solid wood.

The price is said to have been a cool 4.5m Euros and includes a Girard-Perregaux watch designed to fit in the dash.

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GT model shown
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2010 Mazda Tribute
Manual trn., Aircon, ABS, 6 Airbags, traction control, Power locks/windows, mirrors.
GT model shown
Event Bonus $2,500 | New Offer $20,950 | equivalent APR* 5.64%

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Civic DX Sedan model FA1E2AEX

2010 Civic SEDAN

New MSRP‡ $15,990 For Civic DX Sedan

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PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH $2,400 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT

PRICE LOWERED BY $1,000¥

Civic DX Coupe model FG1A2AE

2010 Civic COUPE

New MSRP $16,190 For Civic DX Coupe

LEASE FROM / APR $148#@3.9%£

PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH $2,500 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT

PRICE LOWERED BY $1,000¥

Accord LX Sedan model CP2E3AE

2010 Accord

New MSRP $24,790 For Accord LX Sedan

LEASE FROM /APR $248#@3.9%£

PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH $3,998 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT

PRICE LOWERED BY $500¥ ON 4 cyl. ACCORDs

$1,000¥ ON V6 ACCORDs

CR-V LX 2WD model RE3H3AEY

2010 CR-V

New MSRP $26,290 For CR-V LX 2WD

LEASE FROM /APR $268#@3.9%£

PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH $3,750 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT

PRICE LOWERED BY $1,500¥

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#Limited time lease offers based on new 2010 Honda models. Lease example based on 2010 Civic DX Sedan, model FA1E2AEX available through Honda Financial Services on approved credit. £3.9% lease APR for 48 months. Monthly payment is $148.50 with $2,400 down payment or equivalent trade, first monthly payment and $0 security deposit due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $10,766.54. Taxes, license, insurance, freight and PDI of $1,395 and registration are extra. 96,000 kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. Retailer may lease for less. Retailer order / trade may be necessary. ‡MSRP for new 2010 Civic DX Sedan, model FA1E2AEX / 2010 Civic DX Coupe, model FG1A2AE / 2010 Accord LX Sedan, model CP2E3AE / 2010 CR-V LX 2WD, model RE3H3AEY does not include freight and PDI of $1,395 / $1,395 / $1,550 / $1,580. ¥Prices lowered by $500 on all new 2010 Accord 4-cylinder models; by $1,000 on all new 2010 Accord V6 models; by $1,000 on all new 2010 Civic models except Hybrid; by $1,500 on all new 2010 CR-V models. ∑Holiday Cash Bonus offer applies only to retail customer purchase, lease or finance agreements. $1,000 available on all new 2009 and 2010 Civic models; $750 available on all new 2009 and 2010 Accord models. Holiday Cash Bonus offer includes GST, PST, HST, QST where applicable. Valid only on purchase, lease or finance agreements concluded at participating Honda retailers. #/£/∑Offers valid from December 1, 2009 through January 4th, 2010 at participating Honda retailers. Offers valid only for Ontario residents at Ontario Honda Dealers. Offers subject to change or cancellation without notice. See your Honda retailer for full details.

Sonata touches million in the U.S.

A 2010 Hyundai Sonata recently rolled off the company's assembly line in Montgomery, Ala., marking the one millionth vehicle produced in the United States. The Sonata is Hyundai's top-selling vehicle in North America. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

Pilot perfect for families

A pre-owned Honda Pilot is a great option if you are looking for reliability and plenty of storage.

Second Gear

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
for Metro Canada

MODEL: 2003 to 2008 Honda Pilot
VEHICLE TYPE: Sport Utility
APPROXIMATE USED PRICE RANGE: $13,000 to $30,000

HISTORY/DESCRIPTION: A full-sized sport utility vehicle (SUV), Honda's Pilot's got room for up to eight people, plenty of storage and a towing capacity of over 2,000 kilograms. For Honda drivers with busy families, cottages and power-toys, the Pilot was the machine of choice.

Shopping used, look for hardware like a sunroof, navigation system, premium audio, heated leather seating and automatic climate control. Pilot trim-level nomenclature saw models labeled LX for entry-level, EX and EX-L for mid-range, and EX-L Navi for top of the line.

Power in all models came from a 3.5 litre VTEC V6 engine which developed either 240 or 244 horsepower depending on the year selected. No V8 was available.

A five-speed automatic was standard, as was Honda's Variable Torque Management (VTM) 4x4 system. VTM ran the Pilot in a gas-saving front-drive mode, but could instantly kick in four wheel drive as needed to tackle slippery situations.

The system was fully automatic and mechanically simple, and it required no driver involvement whatsoever. A locking mode could be engaged for more slippery situations if needed.

WHAT OWNERS LIKE: Most owners love the room, capability and feeling of security the Pilot delivers on the road. A commanding driving position, comfortable ride and reasonably responsive steering and brakes are commonly enjoyed, too.

WHAT OWNERS HATE: Common complaints deal with the durability of paint and interior materials. Some owners report paint that chips easily, and leather that's easily scuffed and damaged. Some owners have wished for a telescoping steering column or a more powerful stereo system, too.

COMMON ISSUES: Check front footwell carpeting for moisture, as there have been several reports of a water leak into the passenger compartment. Wet carpeting can cause mildew, mold and rust to the floor beneath.

Check for proper operation of all interior accessories, paying special attention to both the front and rear climate-control blower motors. These should turn on quickly and be free of questionable sounds.

Pay attention to the shift quality of the Pilot's transmission, and note any hesitation, grinding or unwelcome sensations while driving. Shifts should be smooth and consistent.

Otherwise, common-sense used SUV shopping tips are key here. Fully inspect the Pilot's underside for signs of leaks, dents, excessive rust or holes. Ensure all fluid changes are up to date, budgeting for a full fluid change if the vehicle's service history is unavailable.

Also, note that Pilot's engine uses a timing belt which needs periodic replacement. Be sure the timing belt in your used Pilot isn't overdue for a change.

THE VERDICT: Pilot lacks V8 power and has a few issues to watch for, but one could certainly do worse in the reliability department where a large family hauler is concerned.

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New MSRP† $15,990 For Civic DX Sedan
LEASE FROM / APR $148‡ @ 3.9%£
PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH $2,400 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT
PRICE LOWERED BY $1,000*

2010 Civic COUPE
New MSRP $16,190 For Civic DX Coupe
LEASE FROM / APR $148‡ @ 3.9%£
PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH $2,500 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT
PRICE LOWERED BY $1,000*

2010 Accord
New MSRP $24,790 For Accord LX Sedan
LEASE FROM / APR $248‡ @ 3.9%£
PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH $3,998 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT
PRICE LOWERED BY $500* ON 4 CYL. ACCORDS
$1,000* ON V6 ACCORDS

2010 CR-V
New MSRP $26,290 For CR-V LX 2WD
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PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH $3,750 DOWN ON APPROVED CREDIT
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*Limited time lease offers based on new 2010 Honda models. Lease example based on 2010 Civic DX Sedan, model FA1E2AEX available through Honda Financial Services on approved credit. 63.9% lease APR for 48 months. Monthly payment is $148.50 with $2,400 down payment or equivalent trade. First monthly payment and $0 security deposit due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $10,786.54. Taxes, license, insurance, freight and PDI of $1,395 and registration are extra. 96,000 km metre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. Centre Honda may lease for less. Centre Honda order / trade may be necessary. ‡$248 per month for new 2010 Civic DX Sedan, model FA1E2AEX / 2010 Civic DX Coupe, model FG1A2AE / 2010 Accord LX Sedan, model CP2F3AE / 2010 CR-V LX 2WD, model RE3F3AEY. Dealer may sell for less or lease for more. ‡$268 per month for new 2010 Accord LX Sedan, model CP2F3AE / 2010 CR-V LX 2WD, model RE3F3AEY. Dealer may sell for less or lease for more. £3.9% available on all new 2009 and 2010 Civic models, $750 available on all new 2009 and 2010 Accord models. Holiday Cash Bonus offer includes GST, PST, HST, QST where applicable. Valid only on purchase, lease or finance agreements concluded at Centre Honda. †$2Offers valid from December 1, 2009 through January 4th, 2010 at Centre Honda. Offers valid only for Ontario residents at Centre Honda. Offers subject to change or cancellation without notice. See Centre Honda for full details.

Helping your guests drive sober after holiday parties

Discontinuing serving drinks a few hours before a party's over is one of the ways you can ensure your guests don't drink and drive.

Serving the best appetizers and drinks at a holiday party may make you a good host, but not necessarily the most responsible one. Here are a few holiday tips to discourage your guests from drinking and driving:

- Always have a variety of non-alcoholic alternatives available.
- Avoid an open bar. Not only do people tend to drink more than usual, but you have no control over how much they drink.
- Have food available throughout the evening. Remember that salty snack foods can cause people to drink more.
- Don't drink too much yourself. You have to be able to determine if any of your guests have had too much to drink home safely. You can't do this properly if you are intoxicated.
- Discontinue serving drinks a few hours before the party's over. Ensure that food and non-alcoholic beverages are available and encourage your guests to stay for refreshments before they go home.
- Have cash on hand for cab fares. Also, be prepared to have overnight guests.
- When inviting guests, remind them that alcohol will be served and they should plan ahead: take a cab, use a designated driver or stay overnight.

Drinking and driving is one of the leading causes of car crash fatalities in Canada. You can find more information and downloads about road safety at tc.gc.ca/hookedonroadsafety/awareness.htm.

NEWS CANADA

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City: 8.7L/100km (32 MPG)
Highway: 6.0L/100km (47 MPG)▲▲

DON'T PAY FOR 90 DAYS

SL AWD MODEL SHOWN▲
www.nissan.ca/rogue

2010 ROGUE FWD S

CONSUMERS DIGEST BEST BUY

2009 RESIDUAL VALUE AWARD

★★★★★ 5-STAR RATING FOR SIDE-IMPACT CRASH SAFETY[4]

0% PURCHASE FINANCING FOR 36 MONTHS‡

$24,698†† MSRP

LEASE FOR **$269†** PER MONTH FOR **36** MONTHS
Excludes Freight & PDE

LEASE RATE **1.9%** $0 SECURITY DEPOSIT $3,600 DOWN PAYMENT

Standard Xtronic CVT® • Standard ABS, Vehicle Dynamic Control (VDC), and Traction Control System (TCS) • Power windows and door locks
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City: 9.2L/100km (31 MPG)
Highway: 7.3L/100km (39 MPG)▲▲

2010 REDESIGNED SENTRA 2.0

DON'T PAY FOR 90 DAYS

2.0 SL MODEL SHOWN▲
www.nissan.ca/sentra

0% PURCHASE FINANCING FOR 36 MONTHS‡

$15,198†† MSRP

LEASE FOR **$179†** PER MONTH FOR 60 MONTHS
Excludes Freight & PDE

LEASE RATE **4.9%** $0 SECURITY DEPOSIT $1,695 DOWN PAYMENT

★★★★★ 5-STAR RATING FOR FRONT-IMPACT CRASH SAFETY[4]

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*90 days no payments program applies only to purchase finance offers on new 2009 and 2010 Nissan models (except 2009/2010 Altima Hybrid, GT-R, 350Z Roadster and Coupe and 370Z™ Roadster and Coupe) purchased and delivered before January 4th, 2010. Offers available only through Nissan Canada Finance on approved credit. Offer only available on special low rate contracts, and does not apply to Nissan Canada Finance standard rate programs. May not be combined with cash purchase offer. Monthly payments deferred for 90 days. Contracts will be extended accordingly. Interest charge (if any) will not accrue during the first 60 days of the contract. After the 60 days, interest (if any) starts to accrue and the purchaser will repay the principal and interest (if any) monthly from the 90th day over the term of the contract. Offer available on terms up to 72 months. **No purchase necessary. For full rules and how to enter, visit www.nissan.ca/holidaykickoff. Contest closes January 10, 2010. Three (3) Grand Prizes available to be won, each consisting of a trip for two (2) people to 2010 Pro Bowl and Super Bowl XLIV in South Florida. Approximate retail value of each Grand Prize is $10,000.00 (CDN). Random draw will be held on January 12, 2010 in Mississauga, ON. Must be a resident of Canada (excluding Québec), over age of majority. Odds of winning depend on the total number of eligible entries received. Correct answer to mathematical skill testing question required. Limit of one (1) entry per person/household. (c) 2009 NFL Ventures LP. Team names/logos are trademarks of the teams indicated. All other NFL-related trademarks are trademarks of the National Football League. ‡0% purchase financing for up to 36 months available on 2010 Altima Sedan (excluding Hybrid), Sentra, Rogue models. Finance Example for a 2010 Altima Sedan 2.5 S (T4RG10 AE00): $25,098 MSRP, financed at 0% APR for 36 months equals $558.28 per month with $5,000 down payment or equivalent trade-in. Cost of borrowing is $0 for a total obligation of $25,098. Up to $84 PPSA, $1,400 freight and PDE, license, registration, insurance, duties and applicable taxes (including excise tax and fuel conservation tax, where applicable) are extra. Finance offers are available on approved credit through Nissan Canada Finance for a limited time, may change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offers. Retailers are free to set individual prices. Offers valid between December 1st, 2009 and January 4th, 2010. †Lease Examples: $25,098/$24,698/$15,198 MSRP for a new 2010 Altima Sedan 2.5 S (T4RG10 AE00)/2010 Rogue FWD S (W6RG10 AA00)/2010 Sentra (C4LG50 AA00) at 2.9%/1.9%/4.9% lease rate for a 48/36/60 month term. Monthly payment is $289/$269/$179 with $3,475/$3,600/$1,695 down payment, $0/$0/$0 security deposit. Freight and PDE charges ($1,400/($1,500)/($1,325), license, registration, insurance, duties and applicable taxes (including excise tax and fuel conservation tax, where applicable) are extra. All prices are subject to change without notice. Retailer may lease for less. Lease based on a maximum of 24,000 km per year with excess charged at $0.10/km. Total lease obligation is $17,371/$13,300/$12,449. Lease and finance offers are available on approved credit through Nissan Canada Finance for a limited time, may change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offers. Retailers are free to set individual prices. Offers valid between December 1st, 2009 and January 4th, 2010. ††MSRP for a new 2010 Altima Sedan 2.5 S (T4RG10 AE00), CVT transmission/2010 Rogue FWD S (W6RG10 AA00), CVT transmission/2010 Sentra (C4LG50 AA00), manual transmission. Freight and PDE charges ($1,400)/($1,500)/($1,325), license, registration, insurance, duties and applicable taxes (including excise tax and fuel conservation tax, where applicable) are extra. All prices are subject to change without notice. Retailer may sell for less. ▲Actual mileage may vary with driving conditions - use for comparison only. ▲▲Models shown $31,898 MSRP for a new 2010 Altima Sedan 3.5 SR (T4SG10 AA00), CVT transmission/$29,298 MSRP for a new 2010 Rogue SL AWD (Y6SG10 AA00), CVT transmission/$23,098 MSRP for a new 2010 Sentra 2.0 SL (C4TG10 AA00), CVT transmission. Freight and PDE charges ($1,400)/($1,500)/($1,325), license, registration, insurance, duties and applicable taxes (including excise tax and fuel conservation tax, where applicable) are extra. All prices are subject to change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offers. Retailer may sell for less. [1]The Nissan Altima received the lowest number of problems per 100 vehicles among midsize cars in the proprietary J.D. Power and Associates 2009 U.S. Initial Quality Study℠. Study based on responses from 80,930 U.S. new-vehicle owners, measuring 245 models and measures opinions after 90 days of ownership. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of owners surveyed in February-May 2009. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. [2]The 2010 Rogue is winner of a Consumers Digest Best Buy Award. The Best Buy Seal is a registered trademark of Consumers Digest Communications, LLC, used under license. [3]The 2009 Rogue is winner of ALG Residual Value Award - CUV Segment. [4]Government star ratings are part of the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) New Car Assessment Program (www.safercar.gov). U.S. model tested. Please see www.safercar.gov for up to date information. ▪For a limited time receive up to $1,000 Grad discount available on select models when leasing or financing a new 2009 or 2010 Nissan. See retailer for complete Grad program details.

A Porsche for purists

Porsche divided loyalists with the polarizing Panamera sedan, but it will unify them with the stripped down, maxed-out Boxster Spyder that pays homage to some of the marque's best cars. The Boxster Spyder made worldwide debut recently at the Los Angeles Auto Show . METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holmes' parking mate

Actress gets the good spots with compact Yaris

Royal Canadian Air Farce veteran Jessica Holmes drives a 2009 Toyota Yaris similar to this model.

Jessica Holmes recently battled the H1N1 virus, but thankfully got over it just in time for her performance as the good fairy of Sherwood Forest in the holiday run of Ross Petty's latest show, Robin Hood: the EnvironMental Family Musical, at Toronto's Elgin Theatre.

"I had to miss a couple of rehearsals, which put a little kink into things," says the 36-year-old comedian and actress. "But (the musical) is just the most exciting thing I've ever done. I'm having the time of my life."

Best known for her work with the Royal Canadian Air Farce, Holmes' life has shifted into high gear in the past couple of years. Not only is she doing more and more theatre, but she's also in the midst of writing a book. "It's due to my publisher at the end of January. It's definitely crunch time," she says.

Oh yes, and Holmes and her husband, actor Scott Yaphe are raising two young kids, a three-year-old girl and a one-year-old boy. "My life is completely full," she says during a brief rehearsal break.

Because of her increasingly frenetic life, the Ottawa-native, whose first love is stand-up comedy, needs a reliable and compact car to scoot herself and her family around Toronto. So this year she bought a 2009 Toyota Yaris. "I chose it because I'm a bad parker and it's the shortest car I've ever seen," she explains. "But it's a tall car, so it still feels like there's a lot of space. Honestly, I get all the good parking spots!"

Although she says she's not concerned with luxury vehicles — "I just want to get from point A to point B" — she does reveal how in high school, she coveted a forest green Jaguar. "I told my high-school boyfriend that if he wanted to make me the happiest woman in the world when we grew up, he would buy it for me," she says, then adds. Well, they grew up, but the relationship didn't last. "So if my husband is reading this, he should buy it for me," she says with a laugh.

Robin Hood: The EnvironMental Family Musical runs until Jan. 3.

Heather Buchan is a Toronto-based journalist who has worked at Homemakers, Canadian Living, Canadian House & Home and, most recently, Hello! Canada, where she cut her teeth in the world of celebrities.

Jessica Holmes

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or $165 bi-wkly 72 mths
3.5L V6, Auto A/C, AM/FM CD

2007 CHRYSLER 300
$17,995
or $156 bi-wkly 84 mths
3.5L V6, Sunroof, Leather, Heated Seats

2009 SEBRING LTD
$18,595
or $146 bi-wkly 96 mths
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* Vehicle interest rates based on 6.97% APR OAC with $0 down payment, all taxes and dealer fees included in bi-weekly payments. Taxes admin. fees extra on cash purchases.

Nissan adding new global compact car
Nissan has announced it will introduce an all-new global compact car on its innovative new V-Platform technology at the Geneva Motor Show in March 2010. CANADIANDRIVER.COM

Volvo makes their cars sing

JIL MCINTOSH
for Metro Canada

The sound of silence: that's about all you'll hear in Volvo's acoustic design laboratory in Sweden. It's where Eva Lahti and other engineers spend their days in acoustical isolation, eliminating automotive noises that drivers shouldn't have to hear — as well as designing in the ones they should.

Driving Force

"This is a dedicated Volvo facility, which fully opened this spring," says Lahti, an acoustic engineer who is Attribute Leader for the Body Chassis NH division.

"The walls and ceiling are sound-absorbing, with a hard floor. Acoustically, it's like driving outside, where the noise and sound can disappear up into the sky. We're isolated from the surroundings, so we don't get disturbed from cars or airplanes or other things happening outside. There's also a dyno, so we can drive a four-wheel car without moving the vehicle."

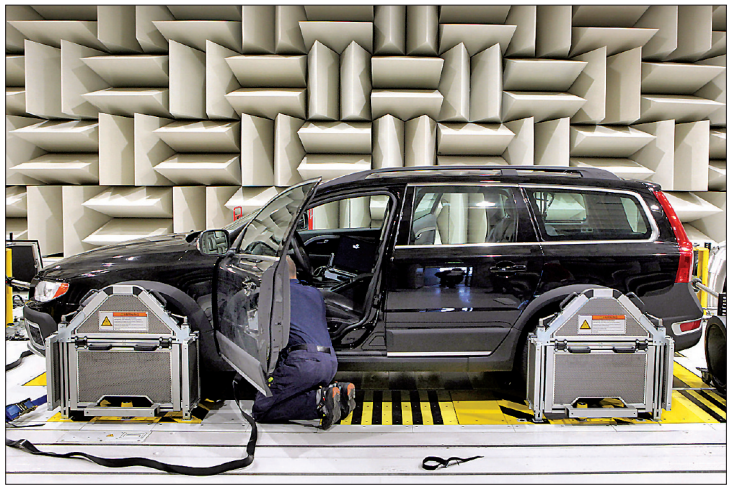
The team works on three types of automotive sounds.

Irritating ones, such as rattles, squeaks or excess road noise, must be eliminated, while informative noises are modulated, including engine sounds or the noise of dials or buttons being activated.

Finally, there are "impressive" noises, such as a satisfying sound of a door closing.

"We strive for sound that emphasizes the Volvo heritage of environmental care," Lahti says.

"It's also an image statement to have the right sound. We want sound we think is Scandinavian: clean, pure, and very refined. We also want a sporty note, but not too much like a racing car."



A technician works at the Volvo acoustic design laboratory, which is dedicated to eliminating unwanted noises from a car as well as adding those sounds which make for a better drive.

A tremendous amount of work and a lot of time goes into making a vehicle quiet.

"We try to find the weakest link from the engine and suspension, from the exhaust and intake system, and how the body works and where we have to make it stronger," Lahti says.

This can include tuning the engine mounts, calibrating the engine, and following any vibrations from the engine compartment and determining how they are transported through the body into the cabin. It's not simply a case of gluing in more sound-deadening mats, but often redesigning body components.

The exhaust is tuned for a pleasant tone, but the engine can't be too quiet: drivers partially depend on sound to know when to shift the transmission, or determine vehicle speed.

"The wind and road noise inform you of how fast you are going, but it should be on a subdued level," Lahti says.

"You want to have some kind of feedback when you drive; otherwise, you get too much feeling of driving a video game. You do not want to lose your intuitive link with the car."

"It's also an image statement to have the right sound. We want sound we think is Scandinavian: clean, pure, and very refined."
Volvo acoustic engineer Eva Lahti

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The best ski resorts for non-skiers

Skiers want nothing but to be on the slopes this time of year. But what if they bring friends or family along who don't ski? Shermans Travel has come up with a list of 10 of the best ski resorts in the world for non-skiers. Check it out at shermanstravel.com. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Travel

In less than a New York minute

The Best of New York In Just 10 Seconds is a select guide to the best places to stay, eat, shop and explore in Manhattan. The guide offers tips on how to uncovers local treasures, or to plan the perfect, well-rounded vacation. The guide is available online at just10seconds.com and will be available as an iPhone and Blackberry application in early 2010. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: BEN.RYCROFT@METRONEWS.CA

Cruising into the Central American past

Far from the movie 2012, ancient Mayan culture comes alive at Altun Ha's sacrificial temple

JOHN AND SANDRA NOWLAN
for Metro Canada

JOHN AND SANDRA NOWLAN/FOR METRO CANADA

Returning from Belize, the Norwegian Pearl stops for the day at its private beach in the Bahamas.

JOHN AND SANDRA NOWLAN/FOR METRO CANADA

The Mayan guide speaks to visitors at Altun Ha's major temple.

It's hard to compete with Bingo. Especially on a cruise ship.

For us, illustrated lectures about upcoming countries and ports are just as important as evening entertainment and fine dining. But on a recent cruise to Central America the always popular Bingo games seemed to coincide with the fascinating lectures by Jim Forrester, an historian from Hamilton, Ont.

Forrester just shrugged his shoulders and said, "That's life," as he enthusiastically presented his illustrated talks about Central America to the couple of dozen guests who appreciated his knowledge of the history and geography of Honduras, Guatemala and Belize.

We chose the Norwegian Pearl for the cruise out of Miami mainly because its itinerary was not the usual Caribbean circuit of tropical islands with endless jewellery stores and souvenir shops. Professor Forrester was particularly enthusiastic about our stop at Belize City, the largest community in the country formerly known as British Honduras. Belize is the only English speaking country in Central or South America.

"The British took over a coastal pirate hideout in the mid-1600s," Forrester said. "They used the town as a base to send mahogany and other precious wood overseas and it grew into a major port. Compared with Honduras, the country is quite prosperous and children are well fed and well educated. "

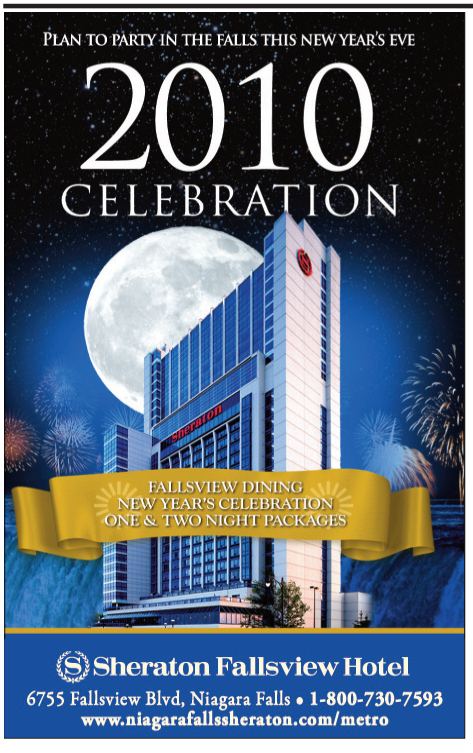
Many cruise ship passengers joined us for a 50 km bus ride to the remarkable ruins at Altun Ha. Altun Ha became famous in 1968 when Canadian archaeologist Dr. David Pendergast discovered a jaede head in a tomb. Now known to represent the Mayan Sun God, the jade head is valued at $60 million and is locked in a bank vault in Belize City. Our guide, Ken, who takes pride in being 90 per cent Mayan, told us that the Jade Head will likely never be displayed for the public. "Officials are terrified it will be stolen," he said. "Only VIPs have seen it."

Still, at Altun Ha, there is a lot to be seen as excavation continues around a plaza and thirteen remarkable structures have been unearthed, the tallest of which is the 20 metre Temple of Masonry Altar. A steep, single staircase leads to the top of the alter where major religious ceremonies took place.

"In all Mayan communities, the higher the building the closer you are to the gods," Ken told us. "But this site is unique. There is evidence of animal sacrifice here but none that shows human sacrifice. Maybe people were happy and felt no need to sacrifice humans. We just don't know."

Back on the Norwegian Pearl, Hotel Manager, Dallas Easterley, gives much of the credit for the line's cruise to Executive Chef Neil Allem of Toronto.

Norwegian Cruise Line generally attracts middle class families or those on a modest budget. But it compares very favourably with the higher end lines. We were impressed not only by the Central America itinerary but by the attention to detail on the ship. We're just not sure about the Bingo.



Pay for experience
When looking for a guide on scuba diving tours, it's best to pay a little more for an experienced diver. Not only is it safer to go with an established instructor, they will be able to show you the little known treasures in the area. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Decompression effect

Unwind at a scuba diver's paradise on Bonaire

On a slow ascent to the surface of the water from 18 m down, the divemaster spots something thrilling along the reef and extends her hand, all five fingers wiggling excitedly. It's a signal that can only mean one thing: octopus!

Scuttling around coral, the octopus quickly scrunches up into an eight-armed torpedo and squirts away. Soon, it stops to unfold itself on a sandy patch of the reef — almost as if to pose the best side of its bulbous, mushy head. Then, it camouflages into the seascape right before our eyes.

It's a surprise to see how quickly the shape-shifter fades into the reef's backdrop. But surprises tend to be the norm in this unique marine park, with a plentiful array of coral, fish and sea creatures. It doesn't take many dives to find validation in the words on vehicle license plates back on land, dubbing Bonaire Diver's Paradise.

With more than 350 species of fish on a reef that circles small island, divers tend to focus on making the most of water visibility that can extend to about 30m in mostly calm waters.

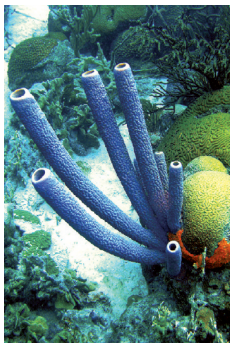
The predominant recreational activity here often requires the silent communication of hand signals and it's a quiet that's also often present on land.

Bonaire lacks loud discos, and there's little demand for 2 a.m. last calls. The island offers some nightlife with waterside restaurants, a small casino with $5 minimum blackjack and bars with acoustic guitar players. But the bright lights you'll see here at night will most likely be coming from underwater, as divers search for small nocturnal sea creatures near shore.

Still, beyond diving and snorkeling, this small sleepy island 80 kms north of Venezuela has plenty of other activities to enjoy while decompressing for the next dive, or even if you don't dive at all.

METRO WORLD NEWS

What Bonaire lacks in clubs, it makes up for in great dive spots.



Bonaire, which is part of the Netherlands Antilles along with Aruba and Curacao, also offers big opportunities for sport fishing. Tuna, marlin and tarpon are among common targets, while fresh wahoo often is advertised on boards outside of restaurants.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

If you go

- High season is Dec. 15-April 14. Departures include service from Miami, Newark, JFK, Houston and Amsterdam, though some flights are offered on a weekly basis or only during peak winter season.
- Check out Captain Don's $29 for shore diving (covers equipment), $50 for a boat dive, $15 for snorkel or boat ride, $47 for cave tours.

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Bars close early

Unlike New York, Philly definitely sleeps. Bars close at 2 a.m., and last call is usually an hour before that. There are some after-hours clubs, but do yourself a favor and just wait for brunch's Bloody Marys. METRO WORLD NEWS

METRO WORLD NEWS

Philly's downtown night life has seen a revival in recent years.

Not just cheese steaks

Philadelphia's world-class galleries and shopping can be done cheap

MONICA WEYMOUTH
Metro World News

For travelers on a budget, Philadelphia's nitty gritty tendencies can come in handy. No, the city isn't as posh as northern neighbor New York and has no beaches to boast of, but Philly's working class sensibilities means no one will sniff when you pull out a coupon.

Art and Culture

There are plenty of museums and galleries here that are worth every penny — the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Academy of Natural Sciences, and the Mutter Museum, to just scratch the surface — but if you're in town on a first Friday, the city's historic Old City district hosts a completely free open gallery night.

Dining

A Philly soft pretzel will only set you back pocket change, but plenty of the city's fine dining mainstays are offering affordable menus these days. Even if you don't land here on a Restaurant Week (during which neighborhoods offer pre-fixe meals) you'll find good food for cheap.

Shopping

While Old City and Center City host most of Philadelphia's upscale boutiques, the quirky South Street shopping district throws in some priceless people watching opportunities. Also, be sure to check out the mosaic murals of local artists Isaiah Zagar while you walk through — tours are available for a small fee if you want to see more of the Magic Gardens.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Mosaic murals cover the walls in the Magic Gardens.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Philadelphia's Liberty Bell.

Top 3 for free

1 Arts: The Philadelphia Museum of Art is an unbelievable work of architecture that hosts a gigantic and first-class collection. It's free on the first Sunday of any month.

2 History: Here's the thing about the Liberty Bell: It's basically just a bell with a big crack in it. It is, however, free and open to the public every day and Philly likes it.

3 Culture: You can rack up a big bill on cheeses and chocolates in the Italian Market, but a walk through is almost as much fun. Between the sights, smells, and rambunctious Eagles fans, it's a priceless tour.

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Everglades on a busy day is slow
Coopertown can attract more than 100 visitors a day. On their busiest week, around Christmas, they'll 500 visitors a day. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Accessible Everglades

Air boat tours offer unrivalled access to Florida's treasure

Jesse Kennon's day begins at 6:30 a.m., as he opens up Coopertown's only bait and tackle shop.

He heads to the only restaurant, where the lunch menu includes alligator tail and frog legs, to make sure the kitchen is ready.

He is then off to spend the day giving air boat rides through the Florida Everglades.

Kennon, or Mayor as they call him here, runs Coopertown, which is less than an hour from Miami but consists of only eight residents — his immediate family.

Still, this town that started in 1945 when Kennon's family first offered air boat tours has turned into a major player in South Florida tourism, attracting about 50,000 visitors a year.

"What we do here is try to show you the beauty and the majestic part of the Everglades," said Kennon, who wears gold-plated alligator jewelry on his neck and another on his ring finger.

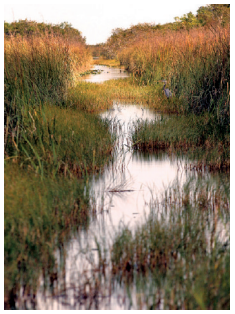
WILFREDO LEE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Air boat tours offer unrivalled access to the Everglades.

Original air boat tours

The original air boat tours show visitors alligators in their natural habitat. The rides are smooth, not bumpy or splashy as some would expect, almost as if you were gliding on 30 cms of water. While on the ride you will catch hints of different aromas: sweetness from the basil trees, a soft grass smell from the freshwater river.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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The simplest and easiest thing you can do to lower your rate right now is to SHOP AROUND. Why? Because the rates charged by different insurance companies to insure the same driver, with the same car, for the same coverage, can vary by hundreds and even thousands of dollars. Take a look at the table below.

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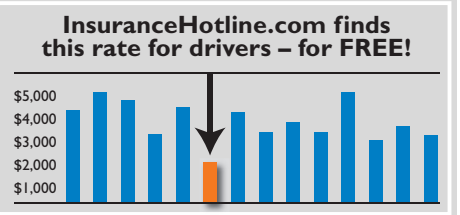

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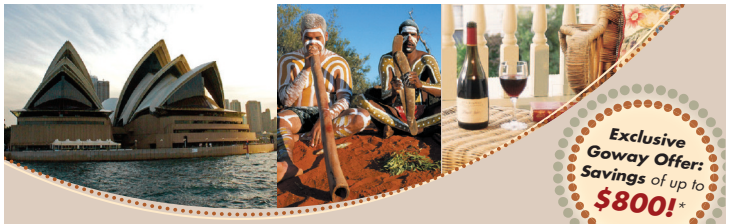

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Where is it?
Bethlehem is located off Interstate 78 in eastern Pennsylvania. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Christmas, carols, casinos

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania catering to a wide audience

Visitors looking to get into the holiday spirit have long travelled to Bethlehem, a lovely little city in eastern Pennsylvania founded by Moravians on Christmas Eve, 1741.

With its well-preserved Moravian architecture, a popular seasonal bazaar called Christkindlmarkt, an impeccably decorated downtown, and a host of Christmas-themed events between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, Bethlehem comes by its reputation as the Christmas City honestly.

The city even has its own star: the electrified Star of Bethlehem that shines year-round from its 25 m perch atop nearby South Mountain.

This year, though, Bethlehem has developed something of a split personality. The Christmas City has become the Casino City — offering slot machines in addition to Santa Claus.

A marketing nightmare for tourism executives? Not really.

Christmas in Bethlehem is still Christmas in Bethlehem.

And the $743 million Sands Casino Resort Bethlehem is still a glitzy new gambling hall with 3,250 slot machines, entertainment, and two restaurants by celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse.

In other words, each caters to its own audience.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MATT ROURKE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tourists take in the Christmas Putz at Central Moravian Church.

Image

- Despite grumbles that it would sully the city's carefully cultivated image, the casino opened in May on the site of the former Steel plant in south Bethlehem.
- Visit christmascity.org for non-casino related activities in Bethlehem

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Avoid Timbuktu
Travel warnings continued to be issued for Mali. After continued terrorism and kidnapping threats, travel agencies are urging tourists to avoid Timbuktu, which is located in the northern part of the country. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Revelstoke getting recognition

Ski.com has added Revelstoke Mountain Resort, a new ski destination in British Columbia, to its top 100 list.

Revelstoke, described by Ski.com as the newest resort in North America, also claims the continent's biggest vertical, up to 18 metres of snow annually, more than 1,200 hectares of lift-serviced terrain and an additional 202,000 hectares of helicopter and snowcat skiing.

It's located in the Monashee and Selkirk mountains in southeastern British Columbia, with a 1,713-metre vertical rise and the longest ski run available anywhere in North America, which goes for 15 kms.

Revelstoke also offers ski-in, ski-out accommodations at Nelsen Lodge at the base of Mount Mackenzie.

Ski.com's deals include five nights at Nelsen in a two-bedroom and four-day lift tickets, from $890 per person on quadruple occupancy, available Jan. 5-23

Visit revelstoke.ski.com for more information about the resort

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOTOS.COM

Revelstoke offers the longest ski route in North America.

Jersey Shore nothing like MTV's show

TRAVEL It's not summertime and it's nothing like the MTV reality show.

But the Jersey Shore does offer plenty to do for visitors this time of year: Main Street shopping, outlet malls and holiday activities.

Jersey Shore Premium Outlets in Tinton Falls and Jackson Premium Outlets in Jackson both have bus departures from Manhattan's Port Authority and NJ Transit stops. For Main Street shopping, check out Cookman Avenue in Asbury Park and the downtowns of Ocean Grove, Toms River, Spring Lake, and Red Bank. For antiques, hit Point Pleasant Beach for the Antique Emporium, Fond Memories Antiques and Canvas House Antiques.

To make a weekend out of it, boutique hotels include Blue Bay Inn in Atlantic Highlands, the Victorian style Majestic B&B in Ocean Grove, and the Oyster Point and Molly Pitcher Inn in Red Bank. The outlet malls also have shop and stay deals with over two dozen area hotels; details at premiumoutlets.com.

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Potter's magic coming to Canada

SCIENCE This spring, Harry Potter fans across Canada will have the chance to step inside the famous wizard's magical world when Harry Potter: The Exhibition opens at the Ontario Science Centre, its first venue outside the United States, on April 9.

Visitors will experience dramatic environments inspired by the Harry Potter film sets and see the amazing craftsmanship behind more than 200 authentic costumes and film props.

Tickets are now available online at OntarioScienceCentre.ca. The exhibition is currently on display at the Museum of Science, Boston.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Blunt instrument

Emily Blunt is learning to play the ukulele. The actress — who stars as Princess of Lilliputia in new movie Gulliver's Travels — has taken up the guitar-like instrument after seeing co-stars Jack Black and Billy Connolly play it on set. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Entertainment

Back to The Hills

Audrina Patridge has officially signed on to star in the next season of The Hills. After weeks of negotiations, she will return to the show that made her famous. USMAGAZINE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Kristen Wiig

Kristen Wiig to host SNL Christmas

TV Kristen Wiig's recurring character Gilly might not seemed filled with holiday cheer, yet NBC is turning to her to host a Saturday Night Live Christmas special.

SNL Presents: A Very Gilly Christmas will air Dec. 17. The two-hour special, will be led by Wiig's Gilly, an ever-smiling Annie-lookalike who delights in violent mischief. The special will feature new sketches with Gilly and highlights of classic holiday SNL sketches.

Wiig, a standout performer on the comedy show, has built Gilly into a popular character.

Alec Baldwin and Steve Martin will also make guest appearances on the special to help introduce clips they've appeared in as hosts, including Baldwin in NPR's Delicious Dish and the Schweddy Balls and Martin in A Holiday Wish.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Film legend comes to life

Me and Orson Wells depicts director at the peak of his creative power

PHIL BROWN
for Metro Canada

Richard Linklater is an unpredictable director who has created a variety of very different films over his 18-year career; ranging from the psychedelic philosophy essay Waking Life, to the melancholic high school comedy Dazed And Confused and the family-friendly Jack Black vehicle School Of Rock.

"Like any person I'm interested in a lot of things and I try not to limit myself as a filmmaker," Linklater told Metro.

"If I'm interested in something, I'm always looking for a way to try and express it on film. That's kind of the prism that I see life through."

His latest movie, Me and Orson Welles, is the story of a young boy who stumbles into Orson Welles' famous 1937 production of Julius Caesar and gets a crash course on life and theater from the larger than life personality.

For Linklater it was a chance to explore Orson Welles without being dragged down by the conventions of a biopic.

"The biopic is a lame genre and hard to pull off," said Linklater. "Orson Welles is just too big to contain in a single film and it would be foolish to try. I felt more confident about biting off a small piece and focusing on one week in his life in 1937."

British actor Christian McKay and teen heartthrob Zac Efron star in Me and Orson Wells.

Movie **feature**

By focusing on this period, Linklater was able to depict Welles at the peak of his creative power and success, while hinting at the flaws that would lead to his eventual downfall.

"You can look at this movie and you can see the genius, but you can also see the seeds of destruction," said Linklater. "The full labyrinth that was Orson Welles is on display and you can project onto it anything you want"

It's a surprisingly complex portrait of Welles and one that required an immensely talented actor to take on the challenging role. Fortunately Linklater was able to find the previously unknown British actor Christian McKay, who captures Welles better than any actor has before.

"From here on it's sort of scorched Earth," quipped Linklater. "You'd be crazy to play Orson after Christian McKay because who could ever combine not only the physical resemblance, but the verve and depth that he brings to it. It felt like a gift from the film gods that we were able to find him."

Linklater lucked out with McKay and was also able to land teenie bopper favourite Zac Efron to lend the movie a star name as the innocent young protagonist who is burned and inspired by Welles. The result is, typically for Linklater, unlike anything he's done before, while still retaining the intelligence and character-driven storytelling that defines his best work.

"You can look at this movie and you can see the genius, but you can also see the seeds of destruction."
Richard Linklater

Me and Orson Welles is in theatres on Friday

It's the kind of film that he hopes to be able to continue to make in an uncertain film industry, "It's a crazy time and the middle ground of filmmaking between mainstream Hollywood movies and no budget indie films that I occupy has shifted," revealed Linklater. "A lot of opportunities have gone away and I'm lucky that I got this made at all."

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Gumbel has cancer
Bryant Gumbel is being treated for lung cancer, the former Former Today show anchor revealed on Live! With Regis & Kelly yesterday morning. He said he had surgery last month to relieve a malignant tumor in his chest. PEOPLE.COM

Firth enters a new world

Actor plays gay college professor dealing with death of his partner

NED EHRBAR
for Metro Canada

Colin Firth stars in fashion designer Tom Ford's directorial debut A Single Man.

Colin Firth considers acting to be a bit like exploring. "Whenever I embark on a project, it's sort of an opportunity to plunge into a particular world, a different perception, to learn about maybe a time or a place that I didn't know much about," the celebrated British actor says.

And in his latest star turn, in Tom Ford's A Single Man, Firth takes on a whole new world — for him at least — by inhabiting the life of George, a gay college professor dealing with the death of his partner.

But as much as he enjoys going exploring, playing a gay man wasn't that different from a normal day at the office. "Love is love," he says. "I don't really feel that there's anything different to play because the partner happens to be male. The person I'll be playing opposite is unlikely to be my lover anyway."

Of course, it being set in America in the early 1960s, his character's sexuality is very much an issue. But Firth sees the restrained manner in which Ford presents it as helpful. "I mean, there's sex running all the way through the movie, which I think is strengthened by the fact that we don't see anybody humping," he says. "We don't need to go into the territory of body functions. What's interesting about sex is its implications."

He's certainly not ashamed to heap more praise on fashion icon Ford, making his directorial debut.

"It was very clear to me that this was not a vanity project. Just his choice of material indicated to me that this was not just a chance to show off his spring collection," Firth says. "He has a great gift. He's never made a film before, but it didn't feel like working with a man who was a novice at all."

While Firth has received accolades for his work before, his performance in A Single Man is generating a whole new level of awards buzz for the actor. And while he finds all the attention flattering, he's trying not to get too used to it. "It's hard to judge an actor who's having his insane and insatiable need for attention fulfilled. He'll probably be at his best," Firth says. "Check in with me when I'm not getting any attention."

Movie feature

"Love is love. I don't really feel that there's anything different to play because the partner happens to be male." Colin Firth

Mix of Six

HOLIDAY Ralph Benmergui and others will read A Christmas Carol at Hart House's Great Hall at 7 p.m. as a fundraiser for the U of T food and clothing bank. $15, $20. uofttix.ca.

READING Yuk Yuk's Mark Breslin will talk about his Guide To Canadian Standup at the Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W., at 8 p.m.

CELEBRITY Hulk Hogan signs copies of My Life Outside The Ring at 6:30 p.m. at Chapters, 142 John St. chapters.indigo.ca.

HOCKEY The Maple Leafs take on the New York Islanders at the Air Canada Centre at 7 p.m. mapleleafs.nhl.com.

SCIENCE The Royal Astronomical Society is holding a meeting at the Ontario Science Centre, 770 Don Mills Rd., at 7:30 p.m.

EVENT LifeEXPERIENCES is hosting a pancake breakfast, demonstrations and tastings at Yonge-Dundas Square. ydsquare.ca.

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INXS to start tour at Games

INXS has announced a new album featuring a group of guest singers and a world tour that will kick off with a show at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver.

Following a two-year hiatus from touring, INXS has been in the studio collaborating with "some of the best-known singers from across the world," according to a representative from the band.

Fortune

A spokeswoman for the band would not confirm whether former INXS frontman J.D. Fortune is part of the new album, due out 2010.

The Canadian singer made headlines in February when he claimed that the band unceremoniously dumped him at a Hong Kong airport after a 23-month tour, leaving him to live out of a truck.

Fortune had earned the right to front the Aussie group after winning the television reality contest Rock Star: INXS in 2005.

According to the band's rep, their Feb. 24 show at Vancouver's BC Place — announced Tuesday as part of a series of Olympic concerts — will kickstart one of the band's "most extensive world tours ever."

"We said early this year that INXS was embarking on their most exciting project since Kick, and we're not here to disappoint," Petrol Electric creative director and founder CM Murphy said in a release.

"2010 will be one of the most dynamic, creative and diverse projects the band has undertaken."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On stage

• Whether or not Canadians own the podium at the 2010 Olympic Games, some Canucks will own the stage. Nelly Furtado, Barenaked Ladies and Billy Talent are among the performers who have been announced to headline the Vancouver Victory Ceremonies at next year's Olympics. Loverboy, Hedley, Burton Cummings, Great Big Sea has also been confirmed for the series, which will feature a performance each night at BC Place from Feb. 14 to 26.

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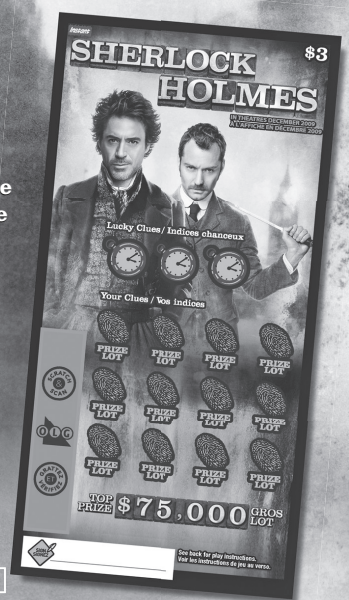

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Banks heads to 30 Rock
Elizabeth Banks continues to exhibit impeccable taste when it comes to the company she keeps on the tube. Fresh off her guest turn on ABC's Modern Family, she is headed to 30 Rock. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CBS' World stops turning

CBS cancelled As the World Turns yesterday, putting the company that coined the phrase soap opera out of the business of making daytime dramas for the first time in 76 years.

As the World Turns has been on the air since 1956 and televised its 13,661st episode Tuesday. Its last episode will be next September, the network said.

It's the second daytime drama CBS has cancelled in a year, after Guiding Light. Both shows were produced by a subsidiary of Procter&Gamble, the company for which the term soap opera was created because it used the shows to hawk products.

Daytime dramas have been fading as a genre for years, with more women joining the work force and the increased number of channels offering alternatives like news, talk, reality and game shows. In tough economic times, paying casts, producers and writers proved prohibitive to networks when there were cheaper alternatives.

The cancellation will leave CBS with only two daytime dramas: The Young and the Restless and The Bold and Beautiful.

Through the years, actors Marisa Tomei, Meg Ryan, Parker Posey and James Earl Jones have appeared on As the World Turns. The show follows families in the Illinois town of Oakdale.

"It's a hell of a Christmas present," said actress Eileen Fulton, who will mark 50 years playing the character Lisa Grimaldi on the show. "I'm just very sad," she said. "I'm sad for all of the people who work out there in Brooklyn (where the show is filmed)."

Brian Cahill, senior vice-president and managing director of the P&G subsidiary TeleNext Media Inc., said the company is actively seeking a new outlet.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Eileen Fulton

Tate pic goes for over $11K

AUCTION A topless photo of filmmaker Roman Polanski and his wife, Sharon Tate, taken just months before her death has sold at a New York City auction for $11,250 US.

The black and white portrait by British photographer David Bailey shows the couple embracing. Christie's says it was sold Monday to an unidentified private buyer. The presale estimate was $8,000 to $12,000.

The 76-year-old Oscar-winning director of ``The Pianist'' is under house arrest in Switzerland. The United States wants him to face sentencing for having sex with a 13-year-old girl in 1977. He fled the U.S. before being sentenced.

His attorneys plan to argue before a California appeals court that the charges should be dismissed.

Tate was murdered in 1969 by followers of Charles Manson.

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Rourke engaged to model

Mickey Rourke is engaged. The former hellraiser, 57, reportedly proposed to 24-year-old Russian model Elena Kuletskaya last week and the smitten couple plan to marry next year in her home country. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Reality series on basketball wives

A VH1 reality series that promises an inside look at the lives of NBA players' wives and girlfriends is set to air early next year.

VHI said Monday that Basketball Wives will show the upside of the women's lives — big homes, designer clothes and jewelry — and the drawbacks, including worries about whether their husbands are being faithful on roadtrips.

Shaquille O'Neal's wife, Shaunie, will be featured and is an executive producer. She filed last month for legal separation with intent to divorce, citing irreconcilable differences.

Others taking part are Eric Williams' wife, Jennifer, and Mesha O'Neal, married to Jermaine O'Neal.

Royce Reed, who has a two-year-old son with Dwight Howard of the Orlando Magic, also will be part of the series, according to a news release from VH1.

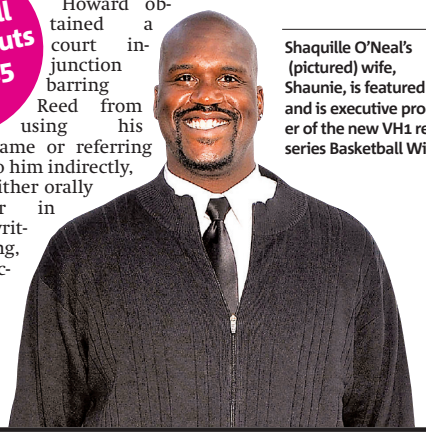
But Howard's name isn't mentioned in the release, and VH1 spokesman Scott Acord declined to say why, adding, "You'll have to watch the show to find out."

Howard obtained a court injunction barring Reed from using his name or referring to him indirectly, either orally or in writing, according to a Dec. 1 report from entertainment site TMZ.

VHI executive Jeff Olde, in announcing the series, noted the public's fascination with the wives of star athletes.

Tiger Woods' wife is in the spotlight now over his recent car accident and his alleged extramarital affairs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Basketball Wives debuts March 15



Shaquille O'Neal's (pictured) wife, Shaunie, is featured in and is executive producer of the new VH1 reality series Basketball Wives.

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Leona's private concert

Leona Lewis was reportedly paid $150,000 US for a private concert. The singer was flown by private jet to Monte Carlo. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Hollywood the grinch?

Fewer festive films and less audience appeal in recent years

DOROTHY ROBINSON
Metro World News

A Christmas Carol took in $30 million its opening weekend, a disappointment when compared to holiday movies of years past.

If Robert Zemeckis can't save the Christmas film, who can?

The director of 2004's holiday hit The Polar Express, which went on to make $180 million worldwide, is having a hard time pushing his new high-tech adaptation of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. The film, which cost $200 million US to make, only took in $30 million its opening weekend, disappointing Disney's expectations (by comparison, Universal's 2000 release The Grinch, also voiced by Jim Carrey, took in more than $260 million worldwide).

And it's not like viewers are going to see other festive films; the only other holiday-themed movie being released this season is Everybody's Fine. So what gives? Where is this year's Four Christmases?

"Over the last couple of years, Hollywood has not seen 'This is Christmas'-type movies win over audiences. And once failure is evident, the knee-jerk is to go another way," says Richard Laermer, author of 2011: Trendspotting for the Next Decade. (Remember Fred Claus? Yeah, neither do we).

So it seems like the studios are launching the blockbusters instead — films such as 2012, Avatar and The Princess and the Frog — this Christmas season to keep audiences happy.

And as it turns out, the studios haven't lost their holiday spirit — they're just focusing on a different one. "There is a dearth of holiday films in 2009 because the big trend is the 'group star movie,' thanks to the ridiculous success of He's Just Not That Into You," says Laermer. "All the studio eggs are in films like next year's Valentine's Day, which stars one type of actor for each segment — everyone from the two Taylors (Lautner and Swift), Ashton (Kutcher), Julia Roberts, Anne Hathaway and Shirley MacLaine."

Xmas cash

A movie for each of the 12 days of Christmas, and their box office take, according to Box Office Mojo.

1. Home Alone (1990): $285,761,243
2. How the Grinch Stole Christmas (2000): $260,044,825
3. The Polar Express (2004): $180,806,128
4. Elf (2003): $173,398,518
5. The Santa Claus (1994): $144,833,357
6. Four Christmases (2008): $120,146,040
7. Christmas with the Kranks (2004): $73,780,5398
8. Fred Claus (2007): $72,006,777
9. National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (1989): $71,319,526
10. Jingle All the Way (1996): $60,592,389
11. Bad Santa (2003): $60,060,328
12. The Nightmare Before Christmas (1993): $50,003,043

DOROTHY ROBINSON

In brief

PEOPLE Elton John's partner says the musician was devastated that he wasn't allowed to adopt an HIV-positive Ukrainian toddler, but plans to support the boy anyway. The 62-year-old pop star met 14-month-old Lev at a home for HIV-positive children in September. But he was refused permission to adopt the boy because he was too old and not married.

MUSIC A former manager of The Fray says the band owes his company more than $750,000 in commission and expenses.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya's Style
Kenya Hunt
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For complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and tickets, visit: metronews.ca/movies

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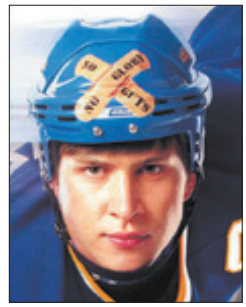
TO	Vu	SD	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
12/9/09 primetime	265	353	2	TVO	The Secret Life of Primates		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		New Tricks		Empire of the Word (N)		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Bones (HDTV PA) (N)		Glee "Sectionals" (N)		Fascinating People		News Final
	215	343	4	OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere V	Omni News:	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	210	302	6	CBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Dragons' Den Winter hat.		Greg Frewin Magic Man		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	214	344	7	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Mercy (HDTV) (N)		Modern Family	Cougar Town	The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	212	313	8	CTV	etalk	Access H.	So You Think You Can Dance		Criminal Minds (N)		CSI: NY "Death House"		News
	218	345	11	CHCH	*The Nutcracker* ★★ (1993, Musical) Macaulay Culkin.				*Some Kind of Wonderful* ★★ (1987, Romance) Eric Stoltz.				News at 11 (N)
	-	-	14	-	Family Guy	The Office	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King	Sid- Alexander
	213	326	15	SUN	The Insider (N)	George Lopez	*Flight of the Reindeer* (2000, Fantasy) Richard Thomas.				The Insider	Hitchcock Pres	Becker
	-	387	16	CBS	Inside Edition	Access H.	Old Christine	Unmarried	Criminal Minds (N)		CSI: NY "Death House"		News 4 at 11
	-	385	17	NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Mercy (HDTV) (N)		Law & Order: Special Victims		The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	-	386	18	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Shrek the Halls	The Middle (N)	Modern Family	Cougar Town	Fascinating People		News
	219	346	20	ACH-B	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	Old Christine	The Middle (N)	*Austin Powers in Goldmember* ★★ (2002, Comedy)				A News
	-	-	28	FOX	Judge Judy (N)	Two/Half Men	So You Think You Can Dance		Glee "Sectionals" (N)		Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
	-	388	61	PBS	PBS NewsHour	Wait for God	Andre Rieu Live in Dresden: Wedding at the Opera				The Priests in Concert at Armagh Cathedral		
	297	652	330	WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Gossip Girl (HDTV)		Victoria's Secret Fashion		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men
	296	654	331	SBK	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Law & Order: SVU		WBZ News (N)	What's-Store	The Office	Name Is Earl	Frasier
	298	653	332	TLA	The Tyra Show		According-Jim	Family Guy	KTLA News	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Gossip Girl
news	502	390	26	NW	Connect Today's biggest stories. (N)				CBC News: The National		Planet Earth		National
	500	500	33	CNN	CNN Tonight (N)		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	509	504	79	CNB	Kudlow Report (Live)		Biography on CNBC		American Greed		American Greed		Mad Money
sports	405	417	22	net	Stars of Torino	UEFA Champions League Soccer Dynamo Kiev vs. Barcelona. (HDTV)					Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	400	400	30	TSN	NHL Hockey New York Islanders at Toronto Maple Leafs. (HDTV) (Live)					Curling 2009 Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings. (HDTV) (Live)			
	411	457	58	OLN	Ghost Hunters International		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Survivorman		Ghost Hunters International		Bounty Hunter
	417	406	81	SC	Pass Time	Pass Time	Dangerous Drives (HDTV)		Pass Time	Pass Time	Wrecked	Wrecked	Pass Time
family	551	542	25	YTV	A Flintstone Christmas		Malcolm-Mid.	Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz	Prank Patrol	Adrenaline Proj
	554	544	45	TEL	Scooby-Doo	Total Drama	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	King of the Hill	American Dad	Futurama	Robot Chicken
	556	540	51	FAM	Sonny Chance	The Suite Life	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
cable variety	602	567	27	W	Friends	Friends	*Me and Luke* (2006, Drama) Kristopher Turner, Louise Fletcher.				*He Sees You When You're Sleeping* (2002)		
	570	580	29	MM	To Be Announced		disBAND	Video on Trial	Video on Trial	Video on Trial	Jonas Brothers	disBAND	MuchTop11
	615	520	31	A&E	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Dog the Bounty Hunter		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Steven Seagal	Steven Seagal	Bounty Hunter
	700	800	35	TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Caterina e le Sue Figlie				George Lopez	George Lopez	Lopez Tonight
	571	581	36	MMM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		Gene Simmons	Gene Simmons	Entourage	Wild 'n Out	mmtop10.ca
	575	583	38	CMT	Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Due South
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		The Guard		Cra$h & Burn		Bones (Part 2 of 2)		NCIS
	620	523	40	BVO	The Achievers	Bravo!Videos	Arts & Minds	O'Reagan File	Wingfield	Star Portraits	White Collar "All In"		Law & Order
	601	562	41	SLC	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		Nearly Dead	Nearly Dead	Nearly Dead	Newlywed	In Laws	In Laws	ET Canada
	522	506	43	HIS	Ice Pilots NWT (N)		Life After People		Ice Road Truckers		Ice Pilots NWT (HDTV)		Outlaw Bikers
	625	548	44	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	RENO 911! (N)	RENO 911!	Daily Show
	600	564	46	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Unsellable	Intervention	Property Virgin	Unsellable	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	Law & Order: SVU		The Office	The Office	*The School of Rock* (2003, Comedy)		
	576	582	49	BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live		*Another 48 HRS.* ★★ (1990, Action) Eddie Murphy.				The Game	The Game	Mo'Nique
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		Torchwood		Supernatural (HDTV)		InnerSpace (N)
	581	566	52	MTV	Super Sweet	Cribs	Jersey Shore Working the summer in Seaside Heights.				Real World-Road Rules		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	King	King	The Outer Limits		ET Canada	What Happen?	Family Guy	King	King
	603	561	56	FOOD	Ricardo	Fresh-Anna	Challenge		Iron Chef America		Chopped (N)		Unwrapped
	261	394	60	V	Murder, She Wrote		Keeping Up	Open All Hours	*Christmas Comes to Willow Creek* ★★ (1987, Drama)				Christmas
	621	527	63	STR	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (N)		TMZ
	553	546	65	TRE	Santa-Town	Night Garden	Max & Ruby	Franklin	A Very Fairy Christmas		Babar	Big & Small	Max & Ruby
	526	507	249	VIVA	Cold Case		Missing (Part 2 of 2)		The Closer		Cold Case		Mediums
	300	601	301	M1	*Between Truth*	(7:25) *Slap Shot 3: The Junior League*			*Knowing* ★★ (2009, Science Fiction) Nicolas Cage.				Lock 'n Load
	305	612	306	PIX	(5:45) *The Gospel of John* ★★ (2003, Drama)				*Eye for an Eye* ★★ (1996, Drama) Sally Field, Ed Harris.				*Rhino Brothers*
	520	146	-	DISC	Daily Planet (N)		Mighty Ships		Mega Builders		Mayday (N)		Daily Planet
	637	-	-	TVLND	Red Green	Red Green	Fantasy Island		Hart to Hart		Andy Griffith	Phil Silvers	Bizarre
	605	-	-	FASH	Australia's Next Top Model		FashionTele	RAW	Canada's Next Top Model		Fashion Television-Toronto Fashion Week		

critics'corner

Slap Shot 3: The Junior League

That sound you hear is Paul Newman spinning in his grave. Thirty-two years ago he starred in the original "Slap Shot," a charming little movie about a ragtag minor-league hockey team. A mediocre direct-to-video sequel with Stephen Baldwin came out in 2002, and now we have this abysmal 2008 follow-up, in which the goofy Hanson brothers (Jeff Carlson, Steve Carlson, Dave Hanson) from the original are coaching a kids league. In other words, it's "The Mighty Ducks" with Greyston Holt ("Durham County") and without — oxymoron alert — the star power of Emilio Estevez. 7:25 PM on M1



Survivorman

Les is more — thirsty. Les Stroud tackles heat and dehydration after being dumped via hot-air balloon on the South African plains. With only one small bottle of water, a machete and his multitool, he must face off against heat, predators and snakes in order to make it out alive in this new episode. 3 PM on OLN

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From Breakfast Club cutie to convicted killer

Anthony Michael Hall returns to primetime as a killer in a guest spot on CBS' CSI: Miami, people.com reports. In the episode airing next year, Hall will play a charismatic former emergency room doctor who is now a convicted murderer. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Rihanna dreams of the silver screen

SONGSTRESS TO ACTRESS Rihanna has revealed she has a naughty streak and gets a thrill from trying new things. "I'm a bad girl and I like dangerous stuff." The 21-year-old beauty is keen to transfer her love of danger onto the big screen. Earlier in the year, the hitmaker had a string of meetings with film bosses and was believed to be in line to star in a remake of The Bodyguard. Rihanna was also thought to be looking into working on a Charlie's Angels sequel and a project with Justin Timberlake.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Cyrus bares belly in front of the Queen

HELLO YOUR HIGHNESS, MEET MY BELLY BUTTON Miley Cyrus was anything but reserved when meeting the Queen at Monday's Royal Variety Awards in London, usmagazine.com reports. Cyrus, 17, sported tiny leather hotpants and a crop top while performing at the star-studded event.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Mirren doesn't mind being naked

DISROBING FOR DRAMA Helen Mirren admits she's much more comfortable going without clothes onscreen. "It's more to do with the role." says the 64-year-old actress, according to Showbiz Spy.

METRO WORLD NEWS

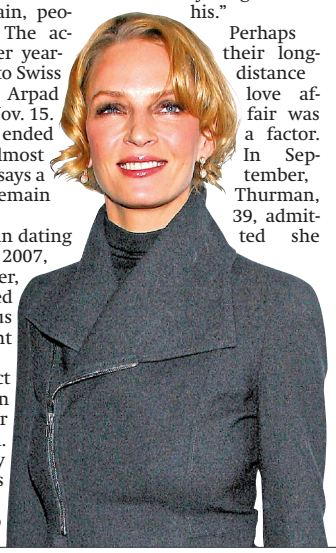
Thurman is manless again

BREAKUP BLUES Uma Thurman is single again, people.com reports. The actress broke off her year-long engagement to Swiss multimillionaire Arpad (Arki) Busson on Nov. 15. "The engagement ended awhile back — almost two months ago," says a source. "They remain friends."

The couple began dating in the summer of 2007, and one year later, Busson proposed with an eight-plus carat engagement ring.

Just don't expect to see that ring on Thurman's finger anytime soon. "She will probably give it back," says the source.

"She wants to return everything that is his."



Perhaps their long-distance love affair was a factor. In September, Thurman, 39, admitted she wasn't planning to marry her London-based fiancé anytime soon.

"I'm happily engaged but we haven't set a wedding up," she told W magazine.

"I'm not in a rush to do anything. One day we'll do it, when we're ready.

"We can't live anywhere else because my children's father lives here. We'll figure it out."

Apparently, Busson is "beside himself" that they weren't able to figure things out, people.com adds.

The businessman has two sons with his former flame, supermodel Elle MacPherson.

Thurman has a son and daughter with ex-husband Ethan Hawke.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Spellings kiss and make up

IT'S ALL FOR THE CHILDREN After years of feuding, Tori Spelling and her mother Candy Spelling are putting their differences aside for the sake of Tori's kids, people.com reports. "They have been in communications," Tori's husband Dean McDermott told People. "Candy has seen the kids, which is what this is all about."

Tori, 36, and Candy, 64, have had a long-standing feud since family patriarch Aaron Spelling died two years ago. Both wrote tell-all books — each taking jabs at each other.

And earlier this year Candy wrote a public letter to Tori in response to the season finale of her reality show Tori & Dean: Home Sweet Hollywood. In the finale, Tori agonizes about inviting Candy to her daughter's first birthday party. (Candy doesn't show.)

Candy accused her daughter of using her grandchildren Liam, 2, and Stella, 1, as "reality-show props."

For now, it appears the ice has melted on their relationship.

As for more details, McDermott says his family is staying mum.

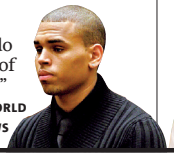
"We are keeping all this private like it should be," he says.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Brown wants to tell his side on Oprah

NOT THE BEST TIME TO USE VIOLENT ANALOGIES Chris Brown is still smarting at the treatment he received from the public, and is blaming it on Oprah Winfrey, according to Hollyscoop. "I felt stabbed in the back," Brown says.

"She could have called me and been like, 'Chris, let me get you on my show and I'm going to do this kind of segment.'"



METRO WORLD NEWS

Brangelina not adopting for now

SECRET MENTOR While Angelina Jolie's visit to the Middle East with Brad Pitt recently sparked speculation that the power couple was planning to adopt another child, the National Enquire has learned that they were actually visiting seven children Jolie has been secretly supporting for years. "Angelina considers the orphans as her own family. She stays in touch with them and really cares about how they are doing," a source says. "She was giving them advice about life and school."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Musical chairs for the musical stars

IT'S THE SIMPLE PLEASURES Zac Efron and Vanessa Hudgens hosted a party for the actress's Sucker Punch castmates at Joe Fortes Seafood and Chop House in Vancouver, B.C.

The casually dressed duo picked out platters of food to serve family style and also mingled with all their guests during the four-hour dinner, people.com reports.

"They played musical chairs, going from table to table to speak with all their friends," a source said.

Afterward, the group piled into a stretch limo and continued the party at Hudgens' hotel.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity tweets

Lady Gaga preps to meet royalty, Penn Jillette knows how to have a good time, Stephen Fry can even make blogging sound classy, and Elisabeth Hasselbeck gets her Twitter hijacked by Adam Lambert.

- @ladygaga Nothin like a whiskey, fish + chips in the UK to prepare for the Queen
- @pennjillette Off to LA for the day. A couple of TV pitches and, in between, we'll try dressing a cow like an elephant. There's no business like it.
- @stephenfry Brekkers time: then I really must get down and concentrate on a blog that I've been meaning to post for simply ages...
- @ehasselbeck Hey this is Adam Lambert!!! Elizabeth is lettin me tweet from her phone!!! Me and Liz! Whaaat? :)

METRO WORLD NEWS

Jay-Z living his own Party Life

DA BIG 4-0 Jay-Z turned 40 in style, with a massive 1920's-themed party in the Dominican Republic featuring synchronized swimmers, fireworks and an impromptu performance by Jay-Z and Alicia Keys, plus a surf-and-turf brunch at his and Beyonce's luxury villa the next day, according to Page Six. "Diddy gave a toast," a source says. "Jay-Z's friends also put together a video saying how much they love him."

METRO WORLD NEWS

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Today Rain 100% 5°/ -7°

Thursday Flurries 40% -1°/ -8°

Friday Flurries 40% -2°/ -5°

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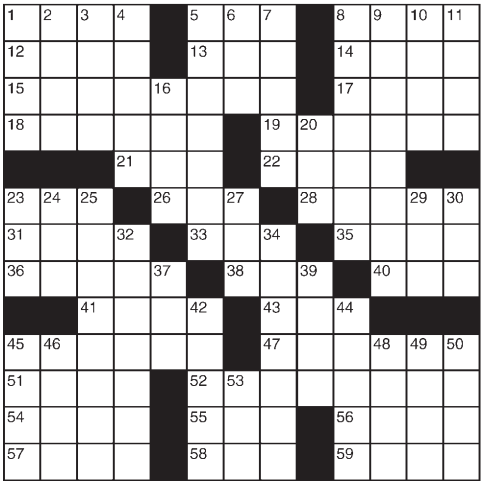
Take Five

For more delicious Metro recipes, visit: **metronews.ca/food**



Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	7						5	
		8				4		
5	2		4	9	1		6	7
	6		7		5		1	
3								5
	4		9		6		7	
7	3		6	5	2		8	4
		1				7		
	8						9	

ACROSS

1 Lecture hall VIP
5 English channel?
8 Showroom sample
12 "The Music Man" locale
13 "Go, team!"
14 "Ars Amatoria" poet
15 From now on
17 Fix
18 It had a big part in the Bible
19 Adheres
21 Not Rep. or Dem.
22 "Critique of Pure Reason" author
23 Raw rock
26 Einstein's birthplace
28 Had the skills
31 Made on a loom
33 Addressee
35 Aforementioned
36 "Psycho" star Janet
38 Choose
40 Say it's okay
41 Stentorian
43 Suture
45 Less of a mess
47 Popular sport fish
51 Big fusses
52 Assess
54 Encounter
55 Melody
56 Young lice
57 Links stats
58 Citi Field player
59 Cavern, poetically

DOWN

1 Lakeside structure
2 Wander
3 As yet unpaid
4 Language of Iran
5 In general terms
6 Tavern
7 Payment method
8 Papa John's rival
9 Ultimately resulting
10 Chinese dynasty
11 Toteboard information
16 Restaurant list
20 Fond du —, Wis.
23 Hooter
24 Fish eggs
25 Villain
27 Cattle call?
29 Recline
30 Banned bug killer
32 The Me Generation?
34 Parvenu
37 Coloration
39 Blue shade
42 Reverie
44 Twisted
45 Pack down
46 Notion
48 Twosome
49 "Beetle Bailey" dog
50 Egg container?
53 Compete

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

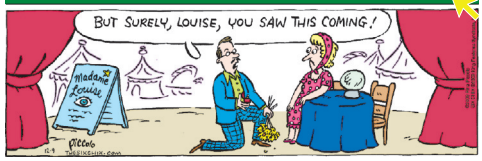
C	A	R	P	■	A	R	F	■
O	R	E	O	■	B	E	E	■
D	I	S	P	R	O	V	E	■
S	A	T	■	E	M	S	■	S
■	■	■	D	E	B	■	V	I
H	U	M	I	D	■	W	A	R
I	R	I	S	■	I	O	N	■
S	I	X	P	A	C	K	■	A
■	■	■	L	I	E	■	S	T
A	C	H	E	D	■	R	I	O
F	L	E	A	■	D	I	S	P
R	O	E	S	■	O	V	A	■
O	G	L	E	■	E	E	L	■

D	O	M	E	■	■	■	■	■
I	D	E	A	■	■	■	■	■
S	O	T	S	■	■	■	■	■
S	P	R	A	Y	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
I	O	R	■	■	■	■	■	■
N	D	Y	■	■	■	■	■	■
A	T	S	E	A	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
S	E	W	■	■	■	■	■	■
P	A	T	C	H	■	■	■	■
C	A	R	E	■	■	■	■	■
T	R	U	E	■	■	■	■	■

6	8	1	9	3	7	2	4	5
9	2	3	4	8	5	1	7	6
7	5	4	2	1	6	3	8	9
1	6	7	3	4	2	9	5	8
2	4	5	8	6	9	7	3	1
8	3	9	5	7	1	6	2	4
3	9	2	1	5	4	8	6	7
5	1	6	7	2	8	4	9	3
4	7	8	6	9	3	5	1	2

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day

Brie Turkey Pockets with Cabbage & Walnuts

INGREDIENTS:

1 oz (30 g) fresh ginger, peeled and grated
1 dessert apple, peeled, cored and grated
4 thick turkey breasts
5 oz (150 g) brie, cut into 4 wedges
3 tbsp (45 mL) olive oil
1 lb (500 g) green cabbage, finely shredded
8 scallions, sliced
1 3/4 oz (50 g) walnuts, chopped

METHOD:

1. Preheat oven to 460°F (240°C). Mix ginger and apple. Cut horizontally through each turkey breast (not all the way through). Divide ginger and apple mixture among pockets, then push wedge of cheese into each. Press meat together into shape and push filling evenly in pockets.

2. Put pockets neatly in one layer in shallow ovenproof dish. Brush with 1 tbsp (15 mL) oil and sprinkle with seasoning to taste. Bake until turkey is browned on top and cooked through, and filling is running out in places.

3. Meanwhile, heat remaining oil in large pan and add cabbage, scallions and walnuts. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until cabbage is reduced in volume and lightly cooked. Add seasoning to taste. Transfer pockets to plates. Add some cabbage to each plate and serve immediately.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

sallybrompton.com For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
The Sun in Sagittarius at this time of year will introduce you to new ways of thinking and new ways of making sense of the world.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
With Venus, your ruler, transiting the wealth area of your chart at the moment you have no choice but to focus on what you earn.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Venus in the partnership area of your chart makes it easy to get along with all kinds of people

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Something unexpected will happen today, something that casts doubts on your long-term ambitions.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
This is one of the best times of the year for you and whatever decisions you take over the next few days they are sure to work out for the best.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
You need to be more open with partners and loved ones and relatives. Find the right words to convey your feelings and then just say them.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Even if you are the kind of Libra who tends to be inhibited in social situations you will have a lot of fun today.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Common sense should tell you that your winning streak is going to end sooner or later, so now would be a good time to cash in some of your chips.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
Your luck is well and truly in at the moment, so take a few risks over the next 24 hours – in fact take as many as you like.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
At this time of year you may have all sorts of dreams and desires, but you must be realistic about them.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Sometimes it can be all too easy to get carried away and start thinking you can do things that are physically impossible.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Do you want to be recognized as you walk down the street? Now is the time to start doing the things that will make it happen.

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HWY: 5.8 L/100KM 49 MPG CITY: 7.1 L/100KM 40 MPG

EX MODEL SHOWN

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